THE AMERICAN WEST

Cover: "The Battle of San Jacinto," painted by Henry McArdle in 1883. This painting vigorously documents the decisive moment in 1836 when Sam Houston's ragtail Texan army drove the forces of Santa Anna across the landscape to wrest independence from the rule of Mexico, and establishes the theme for this special issue of THE AMERICAN WEST: the birth and short life of the Republic of Texas.

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THE

AMERICAN WEST

THIS SPECIAL ISSUE
is also available in a
hardbound library edition
THE REPUBLIC OF TEXAS
with a preface by
Governor John B. Connally.
For further information, see page 76.

Texas in 1822, as seen by amateur cartographer N. Rightor. The eyes of the world would be on the Republic carved out of this wilderness in just fourteen years by Americans carrying the seeds of revolution into the rawhide land of beginning again.

THE
AMERICAN WEST

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SPECIAL ISSUE

THE REPUBLIC OF TEXAS

Special Editor for this issue: STEPHEN B. OATES
With the cooperation of the Texas State Historical Association

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MONTAGE OF THE TEXAS REPUBLIC: A Gallery of Men and Events, 1806-1848

★ 1806: Zebulon Pike Enters the Spanish Southwest

In July, 1806, Lieutenant Zebulon Montgomery Pike set out from St. Louis on an exploring expedition to the Spanish Southwest. Detained by suspicious authorities, he was taken to Santa Fe, then Mexico, and finally deported to the United States through Texas. His careful observations, published in 1810, were to be of great help to the following generation of immigrants to Texas.

★ 1820: An Outpost of Empire

Antonio María de Martínez, governor of Texas, was determined to make the thinly-settled territory a genuine outpost of Spanish empire. He met in San Antonio with an American "empresario" named Moses Austin, who had a plan: to bring three hundred families from the Mississippi Valley to colonize Texas, develop the land, and fight Indians and all the King's enemies. Martínez approved, and Austin returned north to gather settlers.

★ 1821–1824: Stephen F. Austin Leads the Way

Moses Austin died before his colonization plan —approved by the new revolutionary government of Mexico—could get underway. Stephen Austin, his son, took over the project. In 1822 Austin, scarcely twenty-seven years old, settled the "original three hundred" on plantation lands along the Brazos, Colorado, and Bernard rivers. Other Americans came after them to work small farms and plantations, or settle in such "cities" as San Antonio, San Felipe de Austin, Gonzales, and Washington-on-the-Brazos.

★ 1824–1830: From Idyll to Oppression

The American immigrants for a time got along well with the Mexican government. They were especially pleased with the Constitution of 1824, which established a federal system comparable to that of the United States. By 1830, however, the situation had deteriorated. Fearful that the energetic "Anglos" were beginning to take over the territory, the Mexican government not only forbade any further American settlers but outlawed slavery in the province and set up customs houses to collect taxes.

★ 1833–1835: Enter Santa Anna, "Napoleon of the West"

Santa Anna, proclaiming himself a reforming liberal, came to the Presidency of the Republic of Mexico in 1833. Texans were overjoyed, expecting him to restore their rights, grant Texas its own statehood, and suspend the hated customs houses. But Santa Anna was no reformer. In April, 1834, he overthrew the Constitution of 1824, dissolved the Mexican Congress, scrapped the federal system, and announced himself a dictator in the manner of Napoleon Bonaparte. As for the Texans, he declared they would henceforth obey Mexican laws, including the payment of taxes, and sent troops to a garrison at Anahuac to make sure of his demands. In response, a Texan war party took up arms and seized the garrisons at Anahuac and San Antonio. Declaring this an act of insurrection, Santa Anna led an army across the Rio Grande.

★ 1836: Revolt and Disaster

Santa Anna's army laid siege to the Alamo at San Antonio for thirteen days, ultimately capturing it on March 6, 1836, and killing most of its 182 defenders, including Colonel William Travis. On March 27 he ordered the execution of 370 Texan prisoners captured earlier at Goliad. Twenty-eight escaped the massacre, but 342 were shot down by Mexican troops. Nothing more would be needed to ensure Texan resistance to Mexican rule.

★ 1836: "Remember the Alamo! Remember Goliad!"

On March 2 a convention at Washington-on-the-Brazos adopted a declaration of independence, and on March 16 signed a constitution creating the Republic of Texas, naming David G. Burnet first president. Burnet and Sam Houston, commander-in-chief of the Texas "army"—a disorganized but militant rabble—had no love for each other. When Houston took command of what was left of the army at Gonzales and retreated toward Louisiana, Burnet railed at him: "The enemy are laughing you to scorn. You must fight!" As Santa Anna's legions pressed after Houston (and Burnet himself had to flee New Washington for his life), Houston headed for Harrisburg. On the afternoon of April 21 Houston's army attacked Santa Anna's force as it was enjoying a "siesta" and literally obliterated it in the Battle of San Jacinto. Not long afterward Santa Anna signed a treaty acknowledging Texan independence. The Mexican Senate, however, refused to ratify the document. It would never be ratified.

★ 1836–1838: Troubled Beginnings

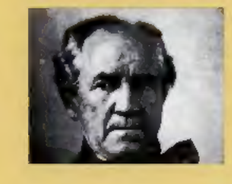
Houston was overwhelmingly elected first president of the Lone Star Republic. Plagued with monetary problems and political feuds, however, Houston's government applied for admission to the United States, only to be rejected because northern leaders opposed annexing "a slave place" to the Union. Texas would have to make it on her own as a self-supporting nation.

★ 1838–1841: Visions of Glory under Mirabeau Lamar

Barred by the Constitution from succeeding himself, Houston had to turn the government over to Lamar in 1838. The second president embarked on a lavish spending spree, which cost Texas $4,855,213 in three years. In addition, he tried to establish a Texan claim to eastern New Mexico by sending out an expedition to capture Santa Fe. The expedition was a total failure.

★ 1841–1842: Attack and Counterattack

Elected to office a second time, Houston vowed to cut government expenses and promised to secure Mexican recognition of Texan independence while still maintaining the peace. He did neither. An inconclusive border war broke out. In 1844 Houston sent out the Snively Expedition to capture Mexican caravans on the Santa Fe Trail, but that westward thrust also ended in failure. In the meantime Houston and his colleagues, realizing that annexation was the only solution to the Republic's difficulties, approached the United States again. Shrewdly hinting that Britain might want Texas if the U.S. did not, Houston effected a more favorable response.



★ 1844–1846: The End of the Republic

Anson Jones, a Houston party man, came to the presidency in 1844 firmly committed to annexation. For two years he worked toward this goal, and was vindicated in February, 1845, when the U.S. offered to annex Texas by a joint resolution of Congress. Texas quickly met the requirements, drafting a state constitution that guaranteed a republican government. On December 29, 1845, President James K. Polk, an enthusiastic expansionist, signed the annexation bill. Said Anson Jones in a lachrymose speech in Austin on February 19, 1846: "The final act in this great drama is now performed; the Republic of Texas is no more."

★ 1846–1848: Aftermath of the Republic: The Mexican War

Mexico, reacting to American "thievery" of Texas, broke off diplomatic relations with the United States in January of 1846, and President James K. Polk sent General Zachary Taylor to the Mexico-Texas border country to "protect" American interests. In April Taylor's forces clashed with Mexican troops, and Congress declared war. Two years, 12,000 American lives, and $100,000,000 later, Mexico surrendered to the United States and signed the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo.

Lone Star Mystique

TEXAS is an international stereotype. Perhaps that is a compliment, although at times living up to a stereotype can be painful, if not downright impossible. If you fail to rise to the audience demand that you be an imperious, imperial Texan, the auditors feel let down. They feel that either you must be traveling under false pretenses in your Texanism, or you don't honor them sufficiently to try to live up to the tradition.

Recently two highly sophisticated representatives of the Canadian Broadcasting Company, one a producer and the other a writer-editor who doubles as a professor of philosophy in a major Canadian university, visited the central Texas area to gather material for a series on the state. In the course of the interview one asked me why Texans are such wheeler-dealers and why we are such violent people. On the first question I could only answer that I personally was not a wheeler-dealer, but did not know whether that represented virtue or a lack of astuteness in knowing what to grab. To the second question the answer was that I do not even pack a gunsight as part of my regular equipment, and that I am not large enough to knock people down with my fist.

In the movie *The Barefoot Contessa* an inordinately wealthy character was described as "owning" Wall Street. When the movie was shown in Brazil, the line was changed to "He owns Texas." Texas and extravagant wealth are closely associated, despite the fact that Texas ranks in the lower half of the states in such statistics as per capita income and expenditures per pupil for public education. Why this association of Texas with empire-size activities, empire-size wealth, and empire-size egos? Why, to the international mind and even to some Texans, the feeling that this is a land apart, an autonomous area, even more excessive and independent than Scotland is to England or Yucatan to Mexico?

THE FACT IS that Anglo-American settlement in Texas was born in controversy and drama, and in the midst of developments that could not be overlooked. The fact is that Texas did become an independent republic, and that it did join the United States as a result of negotiations between independent parties that were, on paper at least, of equal status. And the fact is that shortly after the annexation of Texas to the United States, a war broke out between the United States and Texas' recent owners, the Mexicans, which brought the new state into closer focus.

Certainly, from the time when Moses Austin, a victim of big ideas in partnership with little talent, convinced the Spanish that Texas ought to be settled from the east and north, Texas began to carve its own character. Some believers in latter-day hypernationalism have tried to insist that Texans are a race apart, which is of course pure nonsense. Texans are Mexicans, Negroes, Germans, Greeks, Poles, Czechs, Swedes, and Anglo-Saxons; they came in from New England, the Old South, and the nearer southern states. There was a Cherokee County resident named Bee Hunter, and an illiterate farm family in Smith County with two daughters named Luzyephia and Artemisea. There was the Impey family, who came down to Texas in 1860 with $100 worth of personal estate and no real estate. Levi Impey, his

BY JOE B. FRANTZ

Joe B. Frantz, Director of the Texas State Historical Association, Editor of the *Southwestern Historical Quarterly,* and a widely-published writer, is a native Texan who looks upon his state's history, development, and present-day condition with great affection—if sometimes with irreverence. Here, he sets down his views of the curiously unique image Texas and its people have presented to the world from the days of the Republic.

wife, and first son, were all born in Canada; the next two children in Illinois; another daughter in "Ioway"; a third son in "Utaw"; and Winferd, nearly twenty-one years younger than the eldest son, born "on plains." These were southern aristocrats? Whip-carrying cavaliers riding to glory on the black backs of human slaves? No, they were plain people. But the little boats disgorged them at exotic-sounding ports like Galveston, Matagorda, Copano, and Corpus Christi. Wagons from Nashville, Little Rock, and Cincinnati rolled in through other foreign places such as Nacogdoches and San Augustine. They wound up at un-American settlements like San Felipe, Mina, and Gonzales. The romance of place names colored the Texas image.

Likewise, Texas was really the farthest extension westward of good slave territory. At a time when this unfortunate institution was fighting its desperate battle to keep from being turned into an ugly anachronism, Texas provided an emotional battlefield and advertised itself still further as a center of controversy. Admission of Texas to the Union was branded a plot of the slavocracy; the war with Mexico was a war to protect the inhuman proprietary instincts of the southern planter. This is mostly specious reasoning, of course. The Mexicans in Texas, who largely supported the revolution against Mexico and later the war against Mexico, were not wealthy slave owners. Certainly the Germans were not, nor were the men from the East. And most of the southerners who came to Texas after 1821 were ordinary people. There were exceptions, of course, such as Jared Groce, of Alabama, who brought a rare caravan of one hundred slaves overland to receive eleven leagues (nearly fifty-thousand acres) of free land from Mexico. But on the whole, Texans could not afford slaves. Nonetheless, they stayed in the forefront of the political picture of the period because of the preeminence of slavery as an issue that would not go away.

THERE ARE OTHER FACETS of the Texas mystique. Texas *was* an independent nation—shaky though its position might have been—as independent as any of today's newborn African nations. In Austin the French opened what Texans somewhat grandiosely called an "embassy." Reputedly it is the only embassy of a foreign nation ever established on present or future United States continental soil outside of the nation's capitals. The fact that it was never manned by a higher official than a *chargé d'affaires,* a picaresque character who passed himself off as a Count de Saligny, does not diminish the importance of the fact that the French government was represented in Texas. The fact that from their Texas experience the French conceived the idea of extending their influence over Mexico, and the fact that the British looked on Texas as a provider of cotton and other resources and therefore as an economic buffer against the aggressive United States served at least to make people back in the States more conscious of the existence, and presumed value, of Texas. Texans knew that they had something two major European nations coveted, and they might parlay this desirability into enough influence to make the United States see life through Texas eyes and ambitions. In

the field of diplomacy, Texas was not to be taken lightly. If nothing else, it was a prize pawn. Ego could confuse the role of pawn with power.

IT MUST BE REMEMBERED, too, that the Southwest from Kentucky and Tennessee down through Missouri, Arkansas, and Louisiana, politically organized and generally settled though it was, still had a lot of frontier country. Davy Crockett had been not only a United States congressman, but a real legend in his own time. He brought a *flair* to the United States political scene that delighted the American public, even while he incurred the political wrath of Andrew Jackson. But Jackson's ire only made Crockett a hero to the big body of anti-Jacksonians while advertising him to everyone else. And yet he left this secure place in the affections of the United States and came to Texas to die in the Alamo.

Likewise, Sam Houston fed the world appetite and future Texas spirits by giving up the governorship of Tennessee—and perhaps the future Presidency of the United States—to show up in Texas, where he became the hero of San Jacinto and the first president of the Republic. Many people back in the States felt after San Jacinto that Houston just had to be President of the United States someday. And no less a man than Houston's proud but conquered adversary, General Santa Anna, was quoted in the New York papers as saying to Houston: "You have conquered the Napoleon of the South . . . he who could do that *is born to no common destiny*."

When you add in the sanguine siege of the Alamo, the merciless slaughter at Goliad, and the incredibly quick and efficient victory by the Texans at San Jacinto, you can see readily why Texans were looked upon back in the States as having an uncommon history, even in its brevity. So, *Holden's Dollar Magazine* can claim that "next to the French Revolution, there is no subject so replete with romantic interest as Texas adventures," and make that statement stand up. Men like Horace Greeley and John Quincy Adams could issue anti-Texas screeds all day, but they only served to advertise Texas to the outside and to convince defensive Texans on the inside that they were indeed a special people—if they weren't special, then why would people take time to attack them? Each attack fed the Texas ego, a blend of confidence and defensiveness.

This historic anti-Texas attitude has continued to the present. It feeds the extreme Texan spirit, whether native or imported, and it makes many real and spurious Texans hostile to the outside world. Texas did negotiate as an independent nation in arranging with the United States the terms of annexation—a fact that has always made many Texans feel that they are, in the words of the Montreal *Gazette* (1954), "an affiliate rather than a member of the United States."

BECAUSE THE MYTH of the Texan is somehow special and cannot be lived down, it merely adds exclamation marks to the long sentences uttered loudly by professional Texans. In the notorious Boston police strike of 1919, for instance, a Harvard University student from Texas was called in and commissioned an emergency policeman solely because he was a Texan. Paul Crume of the *Dallas News* tells of one Dallas man who drove to Los Angeles with his entire assets of "a Lincoln Continental and maybe $6,000. By the time he reached the coast, his holdings had increased to 150 oil wells, two refineries, two big cattle ranches, an island in the Gulf of Mexico. . . . This is the way a lot of Texas fortunes are made."

J. Frank Dobie, Texan to the core and therefore properly modest and self-critical, once wrote that "Texans are the only 'race of people' known to anthropologists who do not depend on breeding for propagation. Like princes and lords, they can be made by 'breath,' plus a big white hat—

which comparatively few Texans wear." And that other literary Texan, Walter Prescott Webb, observed as how "Texans should learn silence."

SILENT OR NOT, Texans do have a singular background. Coronado did set out four hundred years ago, bedazzled by the storied wealth of a region somewhere in the direction of Texas; Texans did carve out an area the size of modern France or Germany, and made an independent nation of it; Texas did suffer mightily at the Alamo and Goliad in the best traditions of freedom fighters from Thermopylae to Budapest, and did triumph quickly and totally at San Jacinto; and Texas has won several notable lottery tickets in the way of natural resources. These are positive factors.

On the other hand, these positive factors are diluted by what George Fuermann has called "the Texas neurosis." Instead of quietly accepting its natural superlatives, many of its citizens have felt the necessity to enlarge on its plus qualities, and they have been abetted by an outside commercialization. Texas bucks and Texas jiggers sell better outside the state than they do in. A poll of Texans in 1952, asking them what they liked least about their state, showed forty criticisms, with the leading one being bragging. Texas jokes have become one of the world's clichés, monotonous and almost never imaginative.

Yet anyone who reads the history of early Texas is struck by the favor with which its founding citizens beheld it. In 1844 Sam Houston wrote that if the United States annexed Texas, "we surrender everything and in reality we get nothing, only protection. . . . [If Texas is not annexed] the Glory of the United States has already culminated. A rival power will soon be built up, and the Pacific, as well as the Atlantic, will be component parts of Texas 30 years from this date."

A dozen years later Frederick Law Olmsted, ever a critical Yankee observer, nonetheless said of Texas, "Many times, while making these notes, I have stopped to seek a superlative equal to some individual feature of the scenery. . . . Texas has an Arcadian preeminence of position among our States, and an opulent future before her, that only wanton mismanagement can forfeit."

PERHAPS TEXAS represents an empire, not only because it was once independent and because it did win a revolution independently, but also because its people combined determination with the usual courage, initiative, and resourcefulness of the frontiersman throughout American history. Underlying the whole of western history is a current of confidence, and Texans have remained young in their confidence.

Once upon a time "drest in a little brief authority," thanks to the favorable course of events, Texans have moved across the map of history with a kind of innocence and wonder that there are other people in the world who might see life through different lenses. In another way, they are like a friendly, undisciplined Dalmatian that, as it smothers you with its affection and interest, cannot understand why you do not think it is the greatest dog in the world. In a world that often shows signs of weariness, I personally often wish that Texas would grow up—but only a little bit. At the risk of sounding like what I am, I would like to get rid of the *gaucheries* and hateful excesses of Texas while at the same time retaining its qualities of zeal, faith, and genuine neighborliness.

If the Texas fever, which was real in the early nineteenth century and is both real and too often endemic in the latter twentieth century, could be reduced simply to happy spirit, then Texas could realize a true autonomy of grace and culture and attainment, undiluted by the negative characteristics that too often plague it and retard the development of a truly independent, free, and blithe spirit.

Republican flag of Mexico, 1836

BY CECIL ROBINSON

FLAG OF ILLUSION

The Texas Revolution Viewed as a Conflict of Cultures

Though Americans generally, and Texans especially, have been "remembering the Alamo" for a hundred and thirty-three years and have enshrined such figures as Sam Houston, Davy Crockett, and William B. Travis as folk heroes, the people of the United States have all but forgotten the history of these Texans when they were, at least nominally, Mexicans. Yet a review of this history can be revealing, not only in deepening our comprehension of the Texan Revolution itself but in sharpening our recognition of the cultural storm front that still crosses the American Southwest.

An investigation into the actual abuses suffered by Anglo-American Texans under Mexican rule is not sufficient in itself to explain the Texan Revolution. Other forces were at work as well. On the one hand was the unwillingness of the American colonists in Texas to make any concessions to the customs of their adopted land; on the other was an apprehension on the part of these colonists in facing a future controlled by a government whose instability seemed chronic — it had suffered four major revolutions in six years — and whose lack of respect for law-in-the-abstract was so counter to American traditions. From the days of the earliest American settlements in Texas, conflicts in crucial areas of human behavior developed between the Anglo-Americans and the Mexicans. From 1822 to 1835 the revolution had been slowly ripening, and the Declaration of Causes, which became the revolutionary manifesto of the Texans, was only the hastily composed and inadequate expression of a deeply felt incompatibility. It is the purpose of this discussion to examine those profound conflicts, essentially cultural in nature, which found expression throughout Texas in rising tones of two languages, until eventually all voices became lost in the roar of cannon and the bark of rifle fire.

Despite considerable intransigeance on both sides, there were, during the time that the revolution was germinating, some efforts on the part of both peoples toward cultural and institutional conciliation. Stephen F. Austin, the *empresario* of the largest Anglo-American settlement in Texas, was until the very eve of the revolution a leader of the moderate faction that sought to make a genuine accommodation with the rest of Mexico. Shortly after bringing his band of American settlers to the promised land along the Brazos River, Austin had discovered that he must have his grant confirmed by the central government and had left for Mexico City as soon as possible. In the Mexican capital he had to wait for eight months before getting a hearing, so he spent the time acquainting himself with Mexico's culture.

A remarkable and very complex man, capable of understanding the nuances of another culture, Austin learned the Spanish language and instructed himself in the customs and traditions of Mexico. He also made the acquaintance of most of the important figures in Mexi-

can officialdom. His tact and deference of manner made an excellent impression upon Mexican statesmen and did much for the cause of Texas. Austin's biographer, Eugene C. Barker, says of him: "He possessed the faculty, rare in Americans of any time and in his day almost unknown, of sympathy with an alien race, and willingness and ability to adapt himself to its national mannerisms and sensibilities. There is a sense of unreality, to be sure, about a handful of western backwoodsmen waving a patchwork tricolor and shouting 'vivas' for a constitution which they had not seen and could not read, but to the ceremonious mind of the Mexican there was no incongruity, and it is hardly too much to say that studied observance of such punctilio was indispensable to Austin's success." But even Austin, as will be shown later, was capable of ethnocentricity.

Conversely, the Texans were not without their advocates among Mexican rulers. At several crucial junctures, Governor Viesca of Texas and Coahuila and the regional political chief Ramón Múzquiz effectively pleaded the cause of Texas before the central government in Mexico City. One of the most ambiguous and interesting "friends" of Texas among Mexican officials was General Manuel Mier y Terán. He had been sent to Texas by the Mexican government as the head of a boundary commission. However, his most important assignment was to report back on the doings and attitudes of the Texans, about whose motives and loyalty the Mexican government was becoming increasingly suspicious. Like Austin, Mier y Terán was a sensitive and complicated man. He appeared in the dual role of friend and advocate of Austin and at the same time one of the most effective opponents of the American settlers. Mier y Terán respected the American settlers in Texas, while foreseeing what their presence would mean for Mexico. He once wrote to Austin, "You and I alone understand Texas."

On the whole, however, the situation of the Anglo-Americans and the Mexicans in Texas was not one of cultural give and take. Mexican officials increasingly wondered why the central government had ever admitted these foreigners, harsh men with a take-over manner that boded ill for continued Mexican sovereignty in Texas. The fears of these Mexicans were hardly

In* The Log Cabin *painter Henry McArdle captured a symbolic moment in the settlement of Mexican Texas: Austin, responding to news of raiding Indians, closes* Laws of Mexico *and reaches for his gun, while a Negro slave watches fearfully, a land surveyor interrupts his drawing, and pipe-smoking frontiersman "Deaf" Smith calmly assesses the situation.

quieted by jingoistic statements emanating from political men in the United States. Henry Clay, for example, was on record as having said:

> It was quite evident that it was in the order of Providence . . . that the whole of this continent, including Texas, was to be peopled in process of time. The question was by whose race shall it be peopled? In our hands it will be peopled by freemen. . . . In the hands of others, it may become the habitation of despotism and of slaves, subject to the vile domination of the inquisition and of superstition.

Clay spoke of the plains of Texas as though they had not yet been peopled, and certainly an important aspect

of the situation in Texas was the scarcity of Mexicans in the region before the coming of the Americans. With the exception of a few isolated presidios, each containing not more than a handful of soldiers, the only Mexican settlements in Texas at the commencement of American colonization were those at San Antonio de Béxar (present-day San Antonio) and La Bahía, with a total population of less than four thousand. Of these, the more important was San Antonio. A contemporary account by Lieutenant José María Sánchez will suffice to show the degree of government neglect:

> Although the land is most fertile, the inhabitants do not cultivate it because of the danger of Indians which they face as soon as they separate themselves from their houses, to which these barbarians come often in the silence of the night to do damage without fear of the garrison, for when it becomes aware of this damage, which is irreparable, it is unable to apply any other remedy than the mounting of a continual watch, because of the sad fact of a total lack of equipment, especially military, that leaves no other recourse.

Clearly one of Mexico's problems in its early days of nationhood was that, with a very unsettled political situation in the capital, it was greatly overextended in terms of effective governmental authority and was forced to neglect the development — or even the maintenance — of its northern territories, separated as they were by great distances and intractable deserts from the troubled political heart of the nation.

The Anglo-Americans and other non-Mexican settlers poured into this vacuum. Though Austin's grant in the area of the Brazos was the first and most important one, other *empresarios* followed close behind him with large grants of land from the Mexican government. There were the colonies of DeWitt, Edwards, and Robertson, and also the Irish colony whose *empresarios* were McMullen and McGloin, with a grant extending from the ten league coast reserve along the Nueces and the Frio toward the northwest. Their capital was, naturally, San Patricio.

With this large influx of foreign colonists, the Mexican government became uneasy and countered by sending Mexican families into the area. Among the Mexican *empresarios* who subsequently took over grants in Texas, the most prominent were De Leon and Zavala. However, in terms of the cultural situation that developed in Texas, it is important to note that, though the Anglo-Americans were aliens, they nevertheless made up a substantial majority in a large and isolated area remote from Mexican governmental control.

When the Spanish colonial government in Mexico first allowed immigrants to enter Spanish territory in order to develop the northern regions, it stipulated that all prospective immigrants should, among other things, furnish evidence that they were Catholics. During the last days of Spanish colonial rule, Moses Austin, father of Stephen, made application to the colonial governor of Texas for a grant to bring American families into the region. After an initial refusal, the grant was finally made. Moses Austin represented himself as a Catholic and implied that those he intended to bring into Spanish territory were likewise Catholics. Actually, Austin was never a Catholic, although he may have thought that the verbal acknowledgment of Catholicism as the state religion amounted to the same thing. Both Lucas Alamán and José María Tornel, vigorously anti-American statesmen in the new Mexican nation, cited Austin's religious profession to support their contention that the American migration into Texas was embarked upon deceitfully and that this movement was secretly sponsored by the United States government with the aim of eventually wresting that territory from Mexican rule. However, the grant given to Moses Austin by the Spanish colonial regime was later reaffirmed by the Republic of Mexico in full knowledge of the background of the American colonists. Yet despite this reaffirmation, the law stipulating that citizens of the country must be Catholics remained on the books, later to become a cause of cultural and political disturbance in Texas.

In keeping with other expressions of cultural arrogance, the Anglo-American immigrants, though they had not hesitated to declare nominal allegiance to Roman Catholicism, frequently spoke of that faith as bigotry and superstition. Austin himself spoke of the Mexican devotion to Catholicism as a "fanaticism" that "reigns with a power that equally astonishes and grieves a man of good sense." Yet he constantly admonished his colonists to respect the Catholic Church, and he was always afraid that occasional Protestant services would attract the attention of the Mexican authorities and result in government efforts, hitherto lacking, to enforce the religious provisions of the colonial grants. When Guerrero became president of Mexico, over the united opposition of the clergy, Austin and other Texas leaders began to hope for a governmental decree of religious tolerance. However, no change in religious policy was forthcoming.

Samuel Harmon Lowerie, in studying the letters of

inquiry sent to Austin by prospective immigrants to Texas, found more questions about religion than about any other topic. He concluded that, in view of the ardent evangelism sweeping the American South and West at that time, those colonists who came to Texas in spite of religious intolerance were largely indifferent and religiously atypical of the United States. But he added, significantly, that more than a few expressed confidence in eventual religious freedom, believing that the colonists would soon be strong enough to establish an independent government.

The government of Mexico undoubtedly knew what value to put upon the profession of faith of its American subjects. But, perhaps characteristically, Mexican administrators were satisfied if, without too close scrutiny, they could report that the outward forms of the law were being observed. Indeed, for purposes of avoiding religious contention, they could not have sent a better man as chaplain to Texas than Father Miguel Muldoon, whose easygoing tolerance and amiable vices for some time prevented religion from becoming an urgent issue. Nevertheless, by its very prohibition, the right of free worship took on an importance disproportionate to the amount of religious feeling among the colonists, and in their Declaration of Causes for taking up arms against Mexico, the Texans placed the denial of this right high on the list.

If the religious issue was held in abeyance for some time, another issue, more deeply personal and capable of giving rise to great bitterness of feeling, showed itself from the very beginning of the colonial venture in Texas — the issue of race. One reason for the steady rise in racial tensions was that neither group had the occasion to become well acquainted with the other. According to Lowerie, "... the number of Americans who had the opportunity to live intimately enough among the Mexicans to develop friendship and respect ... can almost be counted on the fingers of one hand.... The opportunities of the Mexicans to come to know the Americans were, if anything, more limited."

Even Stephen Austin — one of the few Americans capable of intercultural communication — occasionally indulged in ethnocentric absolutes. In a letter describing his first trip to Mexico City, Austin wrote: "The people are bigoted and superstitious to an extreme. And indolence seems the order of the day." In June, 1832, at a time when the situation in Texas was becoming tense, he wrote rather complacently to General Ugartechea: "Listen, if all the people of this nation had the same industry in farming, and the love of liberty and for the constitution and the laws that the people of my colony have, there would be more national prosperity and fewer revolutions." Though this statement might well have expressed a reality, it also expressed Austin's failure really to comprehend, sympathetically and imaginatively, the situation of the nation with which he was dealing. The Mexico of his time had just emerged from three centuries of colonial exploitation. A hundred years were yet to pass — years of agony and tumult — before Mexico would find her true personality and style.

If Austin faltered in his efforts to understand the Mexican people, what could be expected of the average Anglo-American in Texas, who knew only the Mexicans in the immediate locality and drew his ideas of the nation from these? General Mier y Terán, in the course of his inspection tour of Texas, was bothered by the poor impression that these local representatives of his country were making. He expressed his fears to the President of Mexico in a letter written from Nacogdoches in 1828:

> It would cause you the same chagrin that it has caused me to see the opinion that is held of our nation by these foreign colonists, since, with the exception of some few who have journeyed to the capital, they know no other Mexicans than the inhabitants about here.... Thus I tell myself that it could not be otherwise than that from such a state of affairs should arise an antagonism between the Mexicans and foreigners, which is not the least of the smoldering fires which I have discovered.

This racial antagonism did in fact work both ways. An interesting document of the time, the diary of Lieutenant José María Sánchez *(Viaje a Tejas en 1828–1829)* reveals the reactions of a Mexican military officer who spent some time in Austin's colony. Sánchez found in the charm and friendliness of a little American girl qualities "so rare among her people." On the other hand, the coarseness and lack of manners of the richest man in the colony appeared typical to Sánchez. The American — aptly named Groce — did not condescend to invite Sánchez and his two assistants into his home for the night; they slept outside on the ground.

In general, Mexican sources described the American colonists in Texas as being cold, industrious, and aggressive. Both Alamán and Tornel attributed the loss of Texas to racial causes. They saw something inherently rapacious in the Americans and traced this predatory

aspect to their northern European ancestry, drawing a parallel with the early Germanic tribes. Alamán spoke of the American *"espíritu invasor,"* and Tornel, in reference to United States expansionism, wrote:

> It has been neither an Alexander nor a Napoleon . . . who has inspired the proud Anglo-Saxon race in its desire, its frenzy to usurp and gain control of that which rightly belongs to its neighbors; rather it has been the nation itself which, possessed of that roving spirit that moved the barbarous hordes of a former age in a far remote north, has swept away whatever had stood in the way of its aggrandizement.

Though of course neither side would agree with the other's assessment of its "racial" qualities, both saw racial attitudes as playing an important role in bringing about the revolt of the Texans against Mexican rule. In summing up the Texan viewpoint, Eugene C. Barker emphasized the racial aspect. "The Texans saw themselves in danger of becoming the alien subjects of a people to whom they deliberately believed themselves morally, intellectually, and politically superior," he writes. "The racial feeling, indeed, underlay and colored Texan-Mexican relations from the establishment of the first Anglo-American colony in 1821."

In considering this history of mutual antipathy, one might well wonder why Mexico encouraged the entry of the Americans into its territory in the first place. One explanation lies in the fact that Moses Austin received permission to enter Texas from a Spanish colonial re-

gime that was about to be ousted. The wealthy Creole gentlemen who hoped to replace departing Spanish bureaucrats in the most lucrative governmental posts envisioned a liberal republic that welded French revolutionary principles to American administrative structure. They felt a warmth and admiration for the United States, which had so successfully defied the mother country. And, because the policy was so very Spanish and bore the stamp of clericalism, the long exclusion of foreigners, especially non-Catholics, was lightly tossed aside by the liberal new republic.

However, the tenure of this group of liberals — who believed that the American immigrants would develop Texas for Mexico — was to be brief. The concepts of the liberals never did take hold in *criollo* Mexico. Throughout the nation's vast and decentralized territory, local administrators received the news of the new "liberal" way of life with an uncomprehending shrug and returned to the proven techniques of viceregal rule. The Americans who came into Texas, on the other hand, brought with them a deeply rooted democratic tradition. Herein lay the basis of another conflict, which was essentially cultural in its nature. The American colonist and the native Mexican soon discovered that the same words could have vastly different meanings, depending on the traditions and conditioned attitudes of those who spoke them. *Democracy, justice,* and *Christianity,* thought at first to be ideals held in common, became the rallying cries of revolution because of the different interpretations put upon them by the American colonists and their Mexican rulers in Texas.

Cases multiplied in which the political assumptions of the Texans clashed with the political practices of the Mexicans. The colonists' custom of staging popular conventions in which they drew up demands and complaints to be presented directly to the central government, bypassing completely the revered chain of command, seemed to Mexican authorities to be on the borderline of treason. Though the colonists did, in fact, suffer a number of real grievances, they themselves were guilty of an intractability, an unwillingness to make any concessions to the traditions of their adopted land. Mary Austin Holley, a relative of Stephen Austin and an early traveler in Texas under Mexican rule, described a "goodly portion" of the colonists as being

> . . . full of pretentions and overflowing with "patriotism,"

Stephen Austin, whose "Mapa de la Provincia de Texas" is shown at the right, spent nearly fifteen years in an attempt to populate the empty wilds of Texas. As the official magistrate in Mexican Texas, he distributed huge empresario *grants to men who agreed to settle a hundred or more families on the land. The map on our facing page, drawn in 1835 by Thomas G. Bradford, illustrates the ultimate division of land, but the bulk of the pre-Republic population of thirty thousand settled in the rich bottomlands of the coastal valleys, leaving the northwestern regions to the wind and the Indians.*

often the veriest "demogoguery"; accustomed at home to vent their spleen on rulers and obnoxious measures, they were not slow to infuse into the before contented community the spirit of resistance on the slightest provocation, until the subject of their declamation, by exciting distrust and jealousy, became real. They forgot the genius and habits of the Mexican people; their newness to self-government, their jealousy of the Anglo-Americans, by a regard to whose peculiarities the fair fabric of Texas prosperity has hitherto been reared.

Though the Texans made loud protestations in the name of freedom, they entered into one of their most intense disputes with the Mexicans, ironically enough, in defense of Negro slavery. The "despotic" Mexican government never looked with favor upon the system of slavery brought into Texas by the Anglo-Americans. To be sure, there had been a small number of Negro slaves in the sugar-growing areas of the gulf states of Mexico before the coming of the American colonists, but most of these had gained their freedom by joining the patriot forces against Spain. The liberals in the new Mexican government saw in this de facto freedom a favorable opportunity to abolish forever Negro slavery in the republic. The importation of slaves into Texas seemed to these liberals to be a resumption of the outlawed slave trade.

The Mexicans, on their side, have beeen accused of hypocrisy in condemning slavery in Texas while upholding a system of peonage that amounted to much the same thing. There may be some justice in this charge. When the Spanish *encomienda* gave way to the Mexican *hacienda*, the theoretical freedom of the *acasillado*, or worker on the landed estate, was recognized. This liberty, however, was given with one hand and taken away with the other. The landowners soon found economic ways to bind the peon permanently to the land, by devices such as inherited debt, easily incurred and impossible of payment, and a system of payment by token instead of money, the token being honored only at the estate store *(tienda de raya)*. Nevertheless, Mexican administrators — themselves mostly of the wealthy, landed class and hardly advocates of social revolution — believed that by abolishing the legal bondage of the *encomienda* they had left the way open for the gradual improvement of the peon's lot.

Whether or not they had been guilty of practicing a kind of de facto slavery themselves, the Mexicans became increasingly hostile to Negro slavery in Texas. When, in September, 1829, President Guerrero issued his emancipation proclamation, Texas was thrown into a panic. By frantic efforts the Texans managed to get a temporary exemption. But there is little doubt that when a plantation owner in Texas thought of the joys of life beyond the reach of the Mexican government, it was more often in terms of the availability of Negro slave labor than in terms of the lofty democratic sentiments that he expressed to the world.

However, on other issues general American opinion would tend to side with the Texans. The function of the military in Mexico, traditionally prominent in Latin American countries, was one that deeply offended the democratic sensibilities of the Texans. The use of soldiers to collect customs duties caused particular resentment, and was to become the occasion of the first resort to arms; but it must be said in defense of Mexico that the contempt among the American settlers for the tariff laws was such that they engaged in a widespread and lucrative trade in contraband. However, by another turn of the argument, it could be said that the Texans were rightfully resentful of these tariff laws, which intruded upon their economic interests and smacked of the closed economic system of colonial Spain.

Another area where Mexican and American traditions clashed was in the administration of justice. There were, to begin with, the underlying differences between the Roman law, which assumed guilt until innocence was proved, and the English common law, which operated on the reverse assumption. Beyond this consideration, the Mexican legal system had other, distinctly Latin American aspects. One was the element of *personalismo* by which subjective attitudes sometimes overruled the abstract claims of justice. Also, there were situations in which the executive and judicial functions were united in a manner that seemed highly improper to the Anglo-American colonists.

A case in point was the somewhat *opéra-bouffe* — but nevertheless important — affair of the burro: A man named Grey bought a burro from De Leon, a Mexican *empresario*, and Grey paid for it but left it with De Leon for some time. When Grey went to claim it, De Leon collected from him twenty-five dollars, a cow, and a calf for the expense of keeping the burro and then refused to deliver it. Later Grey, on a chance meeting with a cart of corn driven by De Leon's son, took the opportunity to attach this property — corn, cart, and yoke of oxen — in order to recover the cost of the undelivered burro. By Mexican law this action was his right. However, De Leon complained to the political chief Saucedo, who

then ordered Austin to have the *alcalde* of Grey's district return the property at his expense, inasmuch as he had issued the writ of attachment. The chief further directed that the *alcalde* henceforth refrain from issuing "illegal writs," especially of such a "scandalous character."

Austin's answer to Saucedo constitutes an important document in the history of culture conflict in Texas. It is couched in typically respectful terms, but before Austin had finished he had delivered something of a lecture to the Mexican political chief:

> I find myself in an exceedingly delicate and embarrassing situation. On the one hand, duty, as well as honor and inclination, urge me to obey faithfully the orders of the superior authority; on the other hand, the same considerations cause me to doubt if my compliance will not amount to an injustice, or produce fatal consequences. . . . The difficulty lies in the disorganizing principle that may be created, and also, in the belief that can not fail to exist in the minds of the settlers, that the executive or political officers unite in their person all the executive and military, political and judiciary powers that were formerly vested in the Governors and the Spanish government.

Unfortunately there is no record of the final disposition of this case, but what is known of it provides a good example of personal rule above the law. Saucedo based his judgment on the alleged affront to a Mexican official's dignity by an Anglo-American, not on the facts of the case or on the provisions of the law. Also, the affair demonstrates the confusion of the executive and judicial powers, for Saucedo had no authority to interpose in a matter theoretically beyond his jurisdiction.

Mexican authorities began to recognize the intense charge of feeling that lay behind the Texans' defense of their own political and institutional traditions. Mier y Terán observed that the American immigrants "travel with their political constitution in their pockets, demanding the privileges, authority, and officers, which such a constitution guarantees." José María Tornel berated the Mexican liberals for having sought to copy American political principles and for having opened the door to the aggressive foreigners from the North:

> Too late have we come to know the restless and enterprising neighbor who sets himself up as our mentor, holding up his institutions for us to copy them, institutions which transplanted to our soil could not but produce constant anarchy, and which, by draining our resources, perverting our character, and weakening our vigor, have left us powerless against the attacks and the invasions of this modern Rome.

Though the Declaration of Causes, hastily drawn up by the Texans on the eve of their revolt against Mexican rule, contains a number of references to specific political and economic conditions that were considered to be abuses of authority on the part of Mexico, unquestionably there lay behind this document the deep disquiet felt by the Texan colonists because of profound frustrations of an essentially cultural nature — frustrations they would have found difficult to articulate. During this period the Anglo-Americans and the native Mexicans in Texas, both proud peoples, functioned under basically different assumptions in essential areas of human behavior. Given the added combustion of race antagonism, could the result have been other than the Texan Revolution?

Cecil Robinson has long had a specific interest in Anglo-Mexican cultural conflict in the American Southwest, an interest reflected in his book *With the Ears of Strangers* and in two articles published in The American West: "Spring Water with a Taste of the Land" (Summer, 1966) and "Legend of Destiny" (November, 1967).

BY WALTER LORD

Myths & Realities of the ALAMO

UNDER A "GREAT ROUND SOUTHERN MOON," James Butler Bonham rode hard for the Alamo. Mexican fire raked the flying horseman. Old Dun was fatally wounded; Bonham was hit. But a sally port flew open and he raced safely in, reining up before his boyhood friend, Lieutenant Colonel William Barret Travis, the garrison commander.

"My God, James," said Travis, "I don't see how you did it — I don't see how you did it."

Bonham sagged, muttered thickly, "I said I'd be back, Will. I said I'd be back." For the next thirty-six hours he lay in delirium, tended by Mrs. Suzanna Dickinson, wife of the Alamo's chief artilleryman.

So Jan Isbelle Fortune told the story in the *Dallas Morning News* of March 8, 1931. She was describing the famous moment during the siege of the Alamo in 1836 when Bonham, failing in his mission to get help, came back to rejoin his embattled comrades.

With various frills, Miss Fortune's version has been told and retold through the years, but that's not to say it's the way it really happened. Actually, Bonham made his dash in broad daylight, not under a "great round southern moon"; neither he nor his horse were hit — the Mexicans didn't even fire at him; the name of his horse is unknown; there's no reliable evidence that he and Travis were old friends; no one knows what they said to each other; and nothing is known of Mrs. Dickinson's role.

Indeed, the only firsthand information we have on Bonham's return comes from two laconic references in letters Travis wrote that same evening. Reporting to the president of the Constitutional Convention, Travis remarked, "Colonel J. B. Bonham (a courier from Gonzales) got in this morning at eleven o'clock without molestation." And again, in a letter to his friend Jesse Grimes: "Colonel Bonham got in today by crossing between the powder house and the enemy's upper encampment."

Yet the myth lives on, for great events always have their legends — the *Titanic* band playing "Nearer My God to Thee"; a wild binge the night before Pearl Harbor — and the same is true of the Alamo. Only more so. Partly, this is due to the very paucity of firsthand accounts; the garrison was slaughtered. But there is more to it than that. After all, there were other eyewitnesses: Travis's slave Joe, about a dozen women and children in the compound, a number of couriers, and various Mexicans and townspeople. Yet, except for a single interview with Joe right after the massacre, it was years before anyone tried to track these witnesses down.

Why? Certainly not lack of interest. All America was moved by Travis's dramatic stand. The best explanation seems to be the very nature of the frontier. People were busy. Research and reporting were civilized luxuries. Who had the time — or even a pencil? As a result it was five years before Reuben M. Potter, the first serious student of the Alamo, even went to the site, and it was twenty-four years before he first wrote down his account. Likewise, it was thirty-eight years before any journalist or historian interviewed Mrs. Dickinson, the sole adult "Anglo" survivor. With few facts available on an event of such epochal proportions, legend naturally filled the vacuum.

Nor did the succeeding years help to set the record straight. The last decades of the nineteenth century were heavy with sentimentality, and it seeped into much of the historical reporting. It is significant that there is not a word about the Bonham-Travis friendship in the earlier Texan writings. Potter is silent; Henderson Yoakum, too; even raconteurs like D. W. C. Baker and Homer Thrall in the 1870's. Then the floodgates opened, thanks largely to a highly romantic piece in *Texas Farm and Ranch* in 1889 by that master of purple prose, John Henry Brown. His account was quickly picked up by Colonel Seth Shepard for an oration in San Marcos and further popularized by Colonel John S. Ford (who also knew a good story) in his *Origin and Fall of the Alamo*. Members of the Bonham clan pushed the ball along with saccharine family tales of how James Bonham and Barret Travis grew up together in South Carolina, and corresponded regularly in later life.

There is not a shred of evidence for any of this. Travis and Bonham were indeed born within ten miles of each other. But the Bonhams were aristocrats, the Travises rough hill people; and it is highly unlikely the two families had much contact. Also, when Barret Travis was only nine and James Bonham was eleven, the Travises moved to Alabama; it is even more unlikely that two boys of that age would keep up a lifelong correspondence. Certainly no letters have survived.

Modern scholarship should have straightened out this entire Bonham-Travis business, but here, too, the myths have been perpetuated rather than exposed. The most widely known academic work is Amelia Williams' Ph.D. thesis, "A Critical Study of the Siege of the Alamo and of the Personnel of Its Defenders." Submitted in 1931 and later published in condensed form in the *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, it has been the leading authority for dozens of subsequent articles and books. Miss Williams did indeed amass a mountain of material, but in a way her thesis has been the worst thing that ever happened to the history of the Alamo. Not because she did so little work, but because she did so much. The sheer bulk of her research has discouraged later students from checking up on her and has led them all too often to take her statements at face value.

This is dangerous. As evidence supporting a Bonham-Travis friendship, for instance, she quotes from an alleged letter written by Travis, urging Bonham to come to Texas. Actually, her quotation is a paraphrase of a reminiscence by Bonham's nephew, recounting the family tradition.

Sometimes Miss Williams relies on pure trash. For example, she uses Frank Templeton's trivial novel, *Margaret Ballentine, Or, the Fall of the Alamo*, as her source for making defender Hiram J. Williamson a West Point man, when any check of the Point's *Register of Graduates and Former Cadets* would show he never attended.

Plan of the Alamo and San Antonio de Bejar in March 1836, drawn for General Vicente Filisola shortly before the Mexican attack.

Most curious is her personal aversion to Travis, which has had much to do with the rather priggish picture of him that exists today and which was especially evident in Laurence Harvey's portrayal in the recent John Wayne film. Miss Williams could get quite upset about Travis, as evinced by a letter she wrote her professor Samuel Asbury in 1933. From Travis's failure to mention Bowie in his desperate appeals for help, she declared she detected what she considered a mean streak, "a cruel, vindictive nature."

Finally — as if the frontier, Victorian bathos, and faulty research were not enough to nourish the myths of the Alamo — there is the matter of Texan pride.

Texans like the Alamo story exactly as it is, and to question any part of it is to invite trouble. The script says Travis drew a line to be crossed by those who would stand by him. Let skeptics beware. "Is there any proof Travis didn't draw the line?" asked a letter in the *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*. "If not, then let us believe it."

So folklore has always flowed through the saga of the Alamo, and it is not at all likely to stop. Myths are present even at the very beginning: the makeup of the garrison. Texans take a rather proprietary view of the defenders, but actually, two-thirds were recent arrivals from the States and, excluding the few friendly Mexicans, only half a dozen had been in Texas as long as six years. They came from eighteen states altogether; five were from Philadelphia alone. A sort of counter-myth has grown up that some came from Europe to help the cause of liberty, but most of these had first settled along the Atlantic seaboard.

Nor were most of the defenders the frontier types that stock so many Westerns. They were really a typical cross section of the America of that period. There was a blacksmith, a hatter, a housepainter, and so forth. Five were doctors, but not one was a professional soldier.

What were these varied men fighting for? Tradition says, for their rights as Mexican citizens under the Constitution of 1824, repudiated by Santa Anna. Relying on this theory (and nothing else), Potter's 1860 account said the flag of the Alamo was a modified Mexican tricolor with the date 1824 printed in the center. It has been shown that way ever since. From Henry Arthur McArdle's heroic painting in the Texas State Capitol to the comic book sold at the Alamo souvenir counter, pictures of the battle almost invariably show a Mexican "1824" flag flying over the fort.

This might have been the case had the battle taken place in the fall of 1835, but by early 1836 times had changed. Most of Texas, and certainly the Alamo garrison, had swung overwhelmingly for independence. "All in favor of independence," wrote Colonel J. C. Neill, still serving as the garrison's commander, on January 23. "Every man here is for independence," echoed Private M. Hawkins the following day. The whole garrison had a chance to go on record at a Citizens' and Soldiers' Meeting on the twenty-sixth. They cast a resounding vote for Governor Henry Smith, who stood for independence. Later, when delegates were sent to the Constitutional Convention, defender Amos Pollard darkly wrote a friend, "If they vote against independence, they'll have to be very careful on returning here."

Perhaps more vigorously than any other painting, Henry McArdle's classic* Dawn at the Alamo *depicts all the fervent mythology that has surrounded the fight. Begun in 1876 and finished in 1883, the painting is seven feet high and twelve wide and illustrates the artist's typical fondness for intricate detail and cameo-like vignettes within the composition. Especially dramatic here is the last stand of Davy Crockett, in the lower right of the picture, and — just above — the coolheaded bravery of Colonel William Travis, who is about to be done in from behind by a particularly sinister Mexican.

Such men weren't fighting for any kind of Mexican constitution, nor under any kind of Mexican flag. For some time the people of Texas had been flying impromptu independence flags, and the men of the Alamo were probably no different from the rest. The handful of Mexican defenders may indeed have clung to a modified "1824" flag — one was seen as Santa Anna's troops entered San Antonio — but the Anglo-Americans were a different matter. Judging from the diary of Mexican Colonel Juan Almonte, only one flag was taken at the Alamo, and that was the azure blue banner of the New Orleans Greys. It can be seen even today, with Santa Anna's victory message attached, at Chapultepec in Mexico City.

There are as many myths about the strength of the forces as there are about the makeup and loyalties of the garrison. The accepted picture is of a tiny band of Texans against an army of Mexicans, but it's not that simple. The Texans may have numbered only about 180 men, but they had some important advantages. One was their artillery — 21 guns — perhaps the largest collection anywhere between New Orleans and Mexico City. Another was the superb long rifle, which could accurately shoot 200 yards. Another was their skill as marksmen.

On the other hand, the Mexicans were weaker than often supposed. Far from the 6,000 men usually cited, they had only 600 at the start of the siege. By the final assault they totalled 2,400, but only 1,800 actually stormed the walls. Many of these were bedraggled Mayan conscripts, who did not even understand the language. Their smooth-bore muskets were completely outclassed — the range was only 70 yards — and most of the men didn't know how to aim them. For artillery, they had only 8 or 10 guns — about a 1:2 disadvantage.

All this is not to detract from the Texans' feat — their determination was sublime — but it does help explain away another myth. Travis was not, as often supposed, simply making a hopeless stand. He believed the Alamo was vitally important ("It is the key to Texas"), and he had high hopes of holding out ("I believe this place can be maintained").

It follows that, contrary to legend, he was anything but resigned to martyrdom during most of the siege. While he always stressed that it was "Victory or Death," he also made it clear that he expected help. His and Bowie's very first appeal to Colonel Fannin at Goliad

on February 23 called for assistance "which we expect you to forward immediately. . . . We have but little provisions, but enough to serve us till you and your men arrive." Writing Houston on the twenty-fifth, he still hoped for reinforcements "in a day or two."

By March 3 Travis had given up on Fannin, but not on the colonists. Writing the president of the Constitutional Convention, he was most specific on his needs: 500 pounds of cannon powder, 200 rounds of cannon balls, 50 kegs of rifle powder, a supply of lead. Nor was his morale down. "I am still here in fine spirits and well-to-do," he wrote Jesse Grimes. "With 500 men more," he added, "I will drive Sesma beyond the Rio Grande."

It's hard to believe that any commander in this mood would then summon his men, tell them they were doomed, and draw a line to be crossed by all who were prepared to die with him. Yet this is the same day when this most cherished part of the Alamo epic is supposed to have happened. According to William Zuber, an old-timer who launched the story thirty-seven years later in the *Texas Almanac*, Louis Rose alone refused to cross the line. Instead, he vaulted the wall, escaped in the dusk, and turned up several weeks later at the home of Zuber's parents in eastern Texas. They took him in, and he poured out his tale.

Is any of it true? Certainly there was a Louis Rose who escaped from the Alamo. This was proved beyond a doubt in 1939 by R. B. Blake, who uncovered the facts in the dusty files of the Nacogdoches County Courthouse. He discovered that Rose's testimony had been accepted by the local Board of Land Commissioners in deciding claims filed on behalf of six different Alamo victims. On Claim No. 254 by the heirs of John Blair, for instance, Rose testified, "Left him in the Alamo 3 March 1836."

Moreover, Rose apparently escaped in much the way Zuber described. This seems clear from a long-buried statement made by Mrs. Dickinson to the state adjutant general in 1876. Her help had been enlisted in developing a more definitive list of Alamo defenders, and part of her statement declared:

> On the evening previous to the massacre, Colonel Travis asked the command that if any desired to escape, now was the time, to let it be known, and to step out of ranks. But one stepped out. His name to the best of my recollection was Ross. The next morning he was missing.

Of course, she did say "Ross," not "Rose." But spelling meant nothing to Mrs. Dickinson, who could not read or write. Nor does the statement have the ring of a coached remark. At this distance, it looks sound enough — especially since there was no "Ross" in the Alamo.

Susanna Dickinson, long billed as the "lone survivor" of the Alamo.

It follows that Travis did indeed make some sort of speech, giving any of his men the chance to step out of ranks and try to escape. From Mrs. Dickinson's account, however, it would appear he spoke on March 5, the night before the massacre, rather than on the third, as claimed by Rose. This would make much more sense. It would explain why Travis's speech was so grim, as against his fine spirits on the third.

Much had happened in those two days: the Mexican lines were closer, the cannonade heavier, his own men wearier — and still no help had arrived. It would also explain why John W. Smith, the courier who left on the night of the third, never mentioned the speech — it had not yet been made. One simply has to allow Rose the same leeway on dates as everyone else in the Alamo cast. They often got the days mixed up — who ever saw a calendar?

The "line" is a different matter. None of the survivors

mentioned it until years after Zuber's story was published, and then only with heavy and not-too-skillful editorial assistance. In 1881, for instance, Mrs. Dickinson had the story backward: the line was to be crossed by anybody who wanted to leave. Worse, she had it all happening on the first day.

Zuber himself later conceded that he had fabricated Travis's speech completely, although it was based on information supplied by Rose. One passage, he added, had not come from Rose at all: "I found a deficiency in the material of the speech, which from my knowledge of the man I thought I could supply. I accordingly threw in one paragraph which I firmly believe to be characteristic of Travis, and without which the speech would have been incomplete." He did not say what it was, but it is easy to imagine the line as the one thing "without which the speech would have been incomplete."

Perhaps the last messenger from the Alamo could have supplied the answer. Tradition says this was John W. Smith, who left on the third with Travis's last dispatch to the Convention, but there's overwhelming evidence that another messenger left later with a final appeal to Fannin. This man reached Goliad on March 8. Four different letters from there note either his arrival or the fresh news he brought — news much later than anything that went out from the Alamo on March 3. Then the picture had been hopeful; now it was desperate. Then some 200 shells had landed in the fort; now the figure was 300. Then the walls had been holding; now "every shot goes through."

This real last messenger was probably sixteen-year-old James L. Allen, who rode from the Alamo after nightfall on March 5. He left no written account, but through the years he told his story to others. At least three of these listeners have independently set down his recollections, and none seems to doubt his word. He was a responsible citizen who later became a tax assessor, justice of the peace, and mayor of Indianola.

So to the final assault. As always in the murk and confusion of close combat, it is especially hard to know what really happened. A persistent story says Travis committed suicide as the Mexicans poured over the walls. Amelia Williams, who did not like him anyway, endorsed this view in her thesis. In support, she cited Antonio Perez, who brought first word of the massacre to San Felipe; Anselmo Borgorra, who broke the news at Gonzales; Andrew Briscoe, whose letter supplied some of the first details to the American people; and Alcalde Francisco Ruiz, who identified Travis's body for Santa Anna. But these four sources really boil down to one:

The Alamo in 1849: a watercolor sketch by Seth Eastman.

Briscoe had picked up everything he knew from Borgorra, who had picked up everything *he* knew from Perez, who wasn't even present during the assault. As for Ruiz, he said nothing about suicide at all, just that Travis had been shot through the head.

Later Miss Williams wrote her professor Samuel Asbury that she had found six more sources—"good ones, better than I cited"—indicating that Travis had committed suicide. She never produced these sources, however, and considering the false confirmation that infested her earlier research, one must remain skeptical.

On the other hand, there is good firsthand evidence that Travis was killed by enemy gunfire. His slave Joe was emphatic on the point, and he was standing right beside Travis when he died. Captain Sánchez Navarro and Colonel José Enrique de la Peña, who wrote detailed eyewitness accounts from the Mexican side, also said Travis died fighting.

There's less controversy about Jim Bowie, who was desperately ill and out of action. All agree he was slaughtered as he lay in his bed. The only question is which bed. A wide variety of sources give six different choices. The favorite is a small room in the church. (After all, this is a place one can visit today.) The best evidence, however, points to the low barracks, a site now blotted out by Alamo Plaza. This position is supported by Francisco Ruiz, who had the grisly task of identifying Bowie's remains, and by three Mexican participants.

A loyal Texan will listen to reason on Travis and Bowie, but David Crockett's death is another matter. He fell "fighting like a tiger." Andrew Briscoe said so. And one is courting trouble even to raise a question. Yet the answer is not that easy; it has never been, since that grim March day in 1836 when the schooner *Comanche,* eight days out of the Brazos, reached New Orleans with first word of the massacre. The horrified passengers told how seven of the victims had been executed after surrendering—among them, David Crockett.

In July, 1836, Colonel Almonte told a similar story to a young Michigan volunteer named George Dolson, whose account soon appeared in the Detroit *Democratic Free Press.* In September Colonel Peña included the incident in his *Diario,* published in Matamoros. Years later Dr. N. D. Labadie, a surgeon at San Jacinto, wrote that Captain Fernando Urizza told him the same thing "four or five days" after the battle. Always, one of the executed prisoners was Crockett.

Whatever happened, by eight o'clock in the morning of March 6, 1836, it was over. As everyone knows, all the defenders were dead. Or were they? Actually, one member of the garrison almost certainly survived: Brigido Guerrero, who talked himself free by claiming to have been a prisoner of the Texans. Two firsthand accounts mention him, and he later made a good enough argument to get a county pension.

More intriguing is the case of Henry Warnell, a tough little ex-jockey who joined the garrison from Arkansas. A sworn statement in a land claim filed in 1858 declares Warnell was "at the massacre of the Alamo . . . that he was wounded at the said massacre but made his escape to Port Lavacca, where he died in less than three months from the effects of said wound."

Finally there are the two men, one badly wounded, who turned up in Nacogdoches toward the middle of March, when it was still believed the Alamo was safe. They declared that "San Antonio had been retaken by the Mexicans, the garrison put to the sword -- that if any others escaped the general massacre besides themselves, they were not aware of it." The quote is from the *Arkansas Gazette* of March 29, a week before the paper carried Sam Houston's "express" reporting the defeat. In thirty-one other newspapers examined, the general's announcement was invariably the first word received. Who were the mysterious pair who gave the *Gazette* its unique scoop?

These, of course, are minor riddles and in no way detract from the glory of the men in the Alamo. Far more than the web of folklore that surrounds them, William Barret Travis's ringing dispatches affirm the reality of their determination and sacrifice.

What did they accomplish? "But for this stand at the Alamo, Texas would have been desolated to the Sabine," declared Guy M. Bryan in his famous speech to the Texas House of Representatives on behalf of "the Babe of the Alamo."

That is the way the story has come down to us, although it is hard to see why. Santa Anna's losses were far from insuperable; he still outnumbered Houston six to one. Nor did the siege seriously upset the Mexican general's timetable. Writing his government on February 16, a week before he first saw the Alamo, he said he expected to have San Antonio by March 2. He was only four days late. The Alamo was actually anything but a successful holding operation.

Nor did it buy time for the Texans, giving them the chance to mobilize and concentrate their forces. Fannin

remained frozen at Goliad. When he finally began a halfhearted withdrawal under Houston's orders, his 380 men were soon surrounded, forced to surrender, and shortly executed. Houston's own troops began melting away. As word of Santa Anna's butchery spread, most of Texas took off on what is now jocularly called the "Runaway Scrape," and hundreds of volunteers rushed away to help their fleeing families. In late March the Texan army had numbered 1,400 men; by the time of the Battle of San Jacinto it was down to 784.

Did the Alamo fail to accomplish anything at all? No, it accomplished a great deal, but here again the reality of the matter is far removed from the myths. First of all, it made Houston's little army blazing mad. "Our garrison at San Antonio was taken and massacred," wrote Private G. A. Giddings to his parents. "If such conduct is not sufficient to arouse the patriotic feelings of the sons of liberty, I know not what will. . . . Rather than be driven out of the country, or submit to be a slave, I will leave my bones to blanch on the plains of Texas."

And he did die for Texas — one of the nine killed at San Jacinto — but the fury of Houston's men in smashing Santa Anna's power in eighteen cataclysmic minutes shows through every word of the letter, and this fury in turn was born in the blood and rubble of the Alamo.

Along with the anger went shame. "If my countrymen do not rally to my relief," Travis had written, "I am determined to perish in the defense of this place, and my bones shall reproach my country for her neglect." The bones did their work well. Every Texan knew in his heart that more could have been done, and as the army retreated eastward under Houston's new Fabian strategy, they grew more ashamed than ever. "Run, run, Santa Anna is behind you!" taunted an old lady from her doorstep. By the time they reached San Jacinto, they wanted only to redeem themselves.

But even if these men had failed at San Jacinto, the Alamo had already made sure that Texas would be independent. An outraged America would see to that. "If our hearts yearned for the Texans before," exploded the Richmond *Enquirer*, "How much more do we feel for them *now* when we see those gallant men butchered by their merciless oppressors. . . . To the rescue, then, brave men of the West! To the rescue!"

They needed little urging. In Natchez crowds packed the river landing as Captain John A. Quitman led 40 local volunteers aboard the steamer *Swiss Boy*. In Buffalo lake-front workers cheered on another 80. In Cincinnati a huge crowd gathered at the Exchange Hotel on April 21 to honor 80 more. That same day Louisville saw off another 40, all with "trusty rifles."

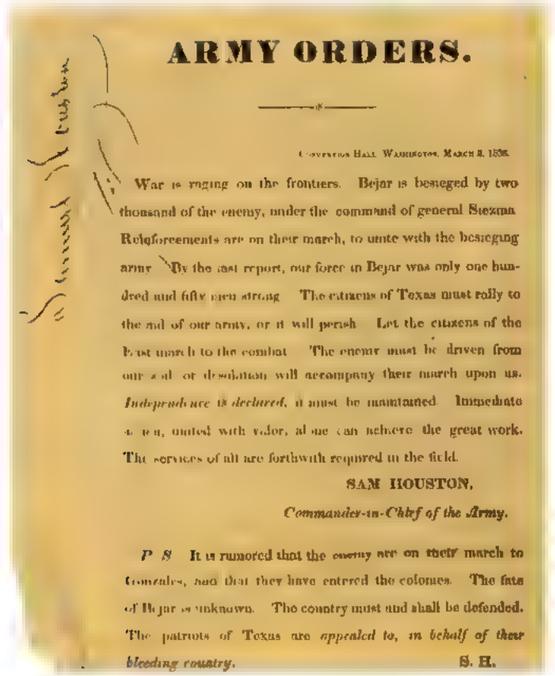
The country stood behind them. A mass meeting at the Tontine in Philadelphia was so crowded many people could not get in. The Natchez rally was one of the biggest ever held in the city. The Mobile meeting raised four or five thousand dollars on the spot. But the big money, as usual, came from New York. When the books for the "Texas Loan" opened two weeks after the city had learned about the massacre, one hundred thousand dollars was subscribed the first day, another hundred thousand the next. The Alamo, in short, triggered a massive flow of United States aid that ensured the ultimate freedom of Texas, whatever might happen in the immediate days ahead.

"Thermopylae is no longer without a parallel," the citizens of Nacogdoches declared in a resolution issued right after the fall. Men saw this then, and they have seen it ever since. "We felt as if we stood upon a consecrated spot . . . we stood within the Alamo," wrote traveler John C. Reid in 1858. "Not a soul surrendered," runs the Japanese inscription on a small granite slab in the Alamo garden, presented by Professor Shigetake Shiga and his visiting students in 1914. Visitors from thirty-three states and eleven foreign countries paid their homage in a single day in 1955. For it is as the editor of the *Telegraph and Texas Register* prophesied on March 24, 1836, in the very first account of the massacre:

> Spirits of the mighty, though fallen! Honors and rest are with ye: the spark of immortality which animated your forms, shall brighten into a flame, and Texas, the whole world, shall hail ye like the demi-Gods of old, as founders of new actions, and as patterns of imitation!

Walter Lord's many books have ranged through a varied selection of dramatic moments in America's past, and many have risen to best-seller fame — including *Day of Infamy*, on the attack of Pearl Harbor, and his latest, *Incredible Victory*, on the Battle of Midway. An intensive narrative history of the last days of the Alamo appeared in *A Time to Stand*.

The Texan War for Independence occurred with the memory of the American Revolution fresh in the minds of the participants, and the propaganda of 1836 bore an unmistakable family resemblance to that of 1776. The lady of liberty above adorned the only flag carried into the battle of San Jacinto by the Texans. Houston's proclamation below, while lacking the masterful touch of Tom Paine's polemics, served the same purpose, and the "Texas!!" poster appealed to a sympathetic audience in the freedom-loving capitals of the American East.



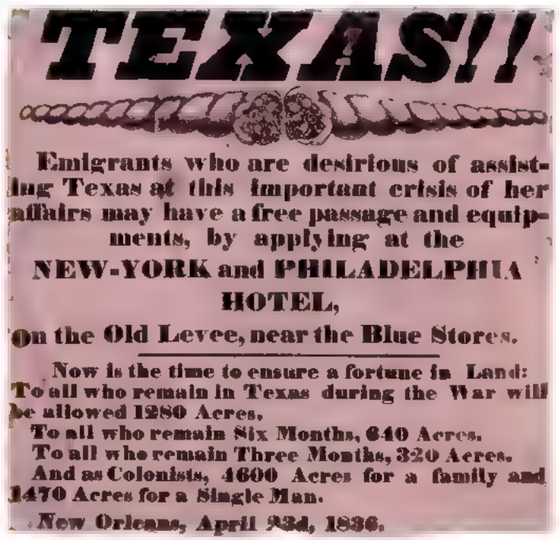
ARMY ORDERS.

Convention Hall, Washington, March 3, 1836.

War is raging on the frontiers. Bejar is besieged by two thousand of the enemy, under the command of general Sesma. Reinforcements are on their march, to unite with the besieging army. By the last report, our force in Bejar was only one hundred and fifty men strong. The citizens of Texas must rally to the aid of our army, or it will perish. Let the citizens of the East march to the combat. The enemy must be driven from our soil, or desolation will accompany their march upon us. *Independence is declared*, it must be maintained. Immediate action, united with valor, alone can achieve the great work. The services of all are forthwith required in the field.

SAM HOUSTON,
Commander-in-Chief of the Army.

P S It is rumored that the enemy are on their march to Gonzales, and that they have entered the colonies. The fate of Bejar is unknown. The country must and shall be defended. The patriots of Texas are *appealed to, in behalf of their bleeding country.* S. H.



TEXAS!!

Emigrants who are desirous of assisting Texas at this important crisis of her affairs may have a free passage and equipments, by applying at the

NEW-YORK and PHILADELPHIA HOTEL,

On the Old Levee, near the Blue Stores.

Now is the time to ensure a fortune in Land:
To all who remain in Texas during the War will be allowed 1280 Acres,
To all who remain Six Months, 640 Acres.
To all who remain Three Months, 320 Acres.
And as Colonists, 4600 Acres for a family and 1470 Acres for a Single Man.

New Orleans, April 23d, 1836.

"Let Us Attack the Enemy and GIVE THEM HELL!"

The Battle of San Jacinto: An Eyewitness Account

BY DR. N. D. LABADIE

edited by Stephen B. Oates

Dr. Nicholas Descompo Labadie, a native of Windsor, Canada, was twenty-nine years old when he migrated to Texas in December, 1830. He settled first in Galveston, then early in 1832 moved to Anahuac, where he practiced medicine and surgery.

When trouble broke out between the subprovince of Texas and the Mexican government, Dr. Labadie was an enthusiastic rebel and joined the "Beaumont and Liberty boys," a company organized in response to a call for volunteers to repel Santa Anna's legions, which had crossed into Texas in January and February, 1836. Labadie's outfit of seventy men rendezvoused at Liberty on March 11 and set out at once to reinforce Colonel William B. Travis and his small force of Texans at the Alamo. On the march the company encountered a "Mr. Padillo," who had attended the Constitutional Convention at Washington-on-the-Brazos, and "from him," the doctor wrote, "we learned, for the first time, that Texas had been declared forever FREE AND INDEPENDENT OF MEXICO," *by a resolution that the Convention had adopted on March 2. Perhaps "Mr. Padillo" also explained that the Convention had reappointed Sam Houston as commander-in-chief of the "Texas Army"—a disorderly mob of 374 volunteers encamped at Gonzales—and that Houston planned to march them to San Antonio. Giving "hearty cheers," the Liberty Company marched toward the Alamo as fast as it could.*

At a noon camp, however, a messenger rode up with "appalling intelligence"—the Alamo had fallen; Travis and all his men had been slaughtered; and Houston, hearing the terrible news, had burned Gonzales and fallen back to the Colorado River. The country was in pandemonium as Santa Anna's columns pressed toward smoking Gonzales and Goliad, and frantic civilians in wagons and on horseback were racing northeast for Louisiana. Hearing this, the Liberty Company rode to join Houston's army on the Colorado River on March 20, 1836, shortly before the general began the controversial retreat across the San Bernard and Brazos rivers that culminated in the battle of San Jacinto near present-day Houston. Thrown into panic by Houston's retreats and the flight of the government to Harrisburg, the colonists scrambled from the path of Santa Anna's armies. Their hasty exodus became known as the "Runaway Scrape."

Labadie's account of the "runaway scrape," and the fight at San Jacinto was based in large part on a journal the doctor kept during the campaign, and was published in the 1859 issue of the Texas Almanac. *With the exception of editorial corrections and deletions, the doctor's account appears substantially as it was published.*

During one week while we were encamped on the Colorado, our army increased by the daily arrivals from about six hundred to sixteen hundred men. In this I know I am correct, as we paraded every day, which gave me an opportunity of making a record of the numbers on the ground, and I made the entry in my journal.

During this time it was understood that orders had been sent to Fannin to retreat [from Goliad], and join us without delay, as the artillery he had was absolutely necessary to us. Meantime, while a new camp-ground was being laid off, the bushes cleared away, etc., three or four tents being already pitched, the painful news of Fannin's defeat was brought into camp by one Peter Carr, whom Houston treated as a spy, putting him under guard. We all, however, believed his report to be true, and it was corroborated by others the next day, after which the numbers in our camp began to diminish rapidly. . . .

It was hinted to me that a retreat was contemplated, notwithstanding the preparations apparently for a permanent encampment. . . . [General Houston] declared to me that . . . as there was a fine spring and plenty of grass six miles distant, he would only move to that place, and then camp. But Major Ben F. Smith, who knew everything that was transpiring, afterwards took me [to] one side, and said with a wink: "We are going to San Felipe, just as straight as the road will lead us — keep this to yourself." . . .

Colonel Sherman was ordered to put the army in marching order. The retreat was continued through this day, and at night we reached the place of Mr. S. M. Williams, about two miles from San Felipe. Here we again camped, using up the fences of Mr. Williams for fuel, as the timber was too far distant. As Houston had decided on marching up the river some twenty miles [to a position] opposite Colonel Groce's plantation, on giving orders to that effect, Sherman found two companies refused to come into line, and he sent a message to that effect to Houston, who had gone in advance with his staff, when he immediately sent back Colonel Hockley with an order to Sherman to put the army in motion, saying, if subordinate commanders were going to disobey orders, the sooner it was ascertained the better.

One of the companies was commanded by Captain Moseley Baker, the other either by Willey Martin or Bird. The army had not marched far, when General Houston sent an order to Baker to defend the crossing at San Felipe, and to Martin to defend that at Fort Bend. Subsequently Baker set fire to San Felipe, and then took his position on the opposite bank of the river, where he defended the crossing till he found the main army was retreating, and then abandoned it. Baker afterwards asserted that he burnt San Felipe by order of General Houston, but the latter denied it. The enemy afterwards, finding the crossing at San Felipe defended by Baker, diverged and went down to Fort Bend . . . and there they crossed over.

Our camp was pitched near a deep ravine, which had the appearance of having once been the bed of the river, and which miserable hole was our hidingplace for about two weeks. . . . While our army lay . . . in the Brazos Swamp, using stagnant water from the old bed of the river, a great deal of sickness prevailed among the men, which caused serious alarm. . . . It was here . . . that the Medical Staff was organized, April 6. To Dr. Phelps was assigned the hospital, which, for some weeks before, had been kept on Groce's plantation, where a few sick had been sent. Dr. Ewing received the appointment of surgeon-general, and by him Dr. Bomer and the writer were appointed surgeons of the first regiment of Regulars. . . .

Owing to the state of inactivity and the increase of diarrhoea in the army, great discontent and murmuring were manifested among all the officers and men. . . . The news of the burning of San Felipe, of the advance of Santa Anna in person, of his reaching San Felipe and Fort Bend, rendered our men impatient of this delay. One day a Mr. Kuykendall came into camp, and stated that he had been taken prisoner by some Mexicans while eating his dinner in his own house; that he was taken before Santa Anna, who received him kindly, and then gave him his liberty, telling him to go and hunt up General Houston, and tell him that he, Santa Anna, was tired of hunting after him and his army, like so many Indians in the woods, but that if he would come out of his hiding-place, he would give him a fight in the open prairie.

This challenge was a little too much for the Texas boys, and the desire to meet the enemy became almost uncontrollable. Colonel Sidney Sherman had been elected colonel of the Second Regiment, to which the Liberty Company belonged; and while all were saying it was time to be doing something besides lying in idleness and getting sick, upon hearing this challenge it was declared to be necessary that the army should have another commander, and Colonel Sherman was pointed out as

the man best calculated to meet the emergency. This came to the ears of General Houston, who at once caused notices to be written and stuck on trees with wooden pegs, to the effect that the first man who should beat for volunteers should be court-martialed and shot.

The next day, some one from the Red Lands arrived and reported that a company from that section had reached Robbins' Ferry on the Trinity [River], where it had halted, as Mr. Robbins stated it to be the wish of the commander that the company should proceed no farther to the west. In reply, Houston said, in my presence, it was right, and that it was his order for the company to stop there.

About this time news came to us that two pieces of artillery had been landed at Harrisburg and would reach the camp within five days. It was this, mainly, that put an end to the movement of beating up for a volunteer commander.... On Friday... (April 10th) we got news that the cannon [afterwards christened the "Twin Sisters"] would probably arrive that night, and the next day they reached Groce's house....

Having now possession of these two four-pound pieces, preparations for the march were at once made, and the whole army soon crossed on the [steamboat] *Yellow Stone* without difficulty. I believe the crossing was commenced on the 12th [of April], and I know it was completed on the 13th and 14th, as my journal is to that effect.... The next day, on the 15th, the army marched six miles to Mr. Donohoe's place, and then camped.

While the companies were taking the ground allotted them, I observed Captain Moseley Baker (who had just joined us) apparently much absorbed in thought. As General Houston came up, he said to him: "General, according to your orders, I have retreated with my company, which is now encamped in good order, three miles above."

Then came Captain Martin, who said: "General, I have brought but my sword; my company has disbanded. On hearing that you were retreating to Nacogdoches, they declared they would no longer bear arms, but would protect their families; and they have therefore all dispersed."

I was then standing within four or five steps of General Houston, and I asked Captain Baker if his company was on the road to Robbins' Ferry. "They are on that road," said he.

"But," said I, "are you and your men willing to retreat there?"

"Where?" said he.

"To the Red Lands," I replied.

"No, never! never!" said he; "for if General Houston will not take us to meet the enemy, we will elect a commander who will."

Owing to the conflicting opinions as to which road the army was to take after reaching Mr. Roberts' [place], where it forked, I wanted to satisfy myself on that point and went to Major Ben Smith for information. He replied to my inquiry that it was his opinion the army would continue straight on and cross the Trinity at Robbins' Ferry. As many were unwilling to go on that road, a halt was expected to be made at Roberts', and as we neared that point (17th April), the writer, with three or four others, galloped to near the advance guard, the captain of which told us he had received no orders, but would go between the two roads.

As General Houston was now coming up, several of us desired Mr. Roberts, who was standing on his gate, to point out to all — *the road to Harrisburg*. General Houston was then close by, when Roberts raised his hand, and elevating his voice, cried out: "That right-hand road will carry you to Harrisburg just as straight as a compass."

A shout was then raised: "To the right, boys, to the right."

The whole line was fast closing up, as the music had stopped; but upon hearing the shout from the men, the music proceeded to the right. The advance-guard, then a quarter of a mile ahead, between the two roads, seeing the music take the right, wheeled also to the right; and then loud and joyous shouts followed in succession, and the band of music, forgetting itself in its enthusiasm, distanced all the rest....

We arrived opposite Harrisburg about noon [on April 18], when the smoke at the town told us too plainly to be mistaken that the enemy had been there before us and set fire to its buildings. After camping a little below, our spy, Deaf Smith, found means to cross the bayou with a few others; and about eight o'clock that night he came back bringing captive a Mexican express carrier with a pair of deer-skin saddle-bags full of documents for Santa Anna. These saddle-bags had belonged to Travis and had his name upon them. [The carrier] had come from Mexico by way of San Antonio.

That night Colonel Sherman was ordered to cross the cavalry over the bayou at that place, thinking the enemy was still lurking in the neighborhood. He took one of

the cannon and placed it upon the bank of the bayou to protect his men while crossing. He had succeeded in crossing Captain Karnes' company by swimming his horses and sending over his baggage on a raft which had been constructed for the purpose, when he received orders through Colonel Rusk to discontinue crossing the men, as it was ascertained that by crossing at Harrisburg they would have another difficult bayou (Syms') to cross on the march to Lynchburg. Accordingly the balance of the cavalry joined the main army next morning and crossed Buffalo Bayou below the mouth of Syms'. . . .

We had all the particulars of Santa Anna being in advance of us, and we now felt certain that a decisive conflict was bound to take place. Before crossing the bayou, General Houston made us an animated speech, towards the conclusion of which he said: "The army will cross and we will meet the enemy. Some of us may be killed and must be killed; but, soldiers, remember the Alamo, the Alamo! the Alamo!"

Major Somerville remarked: "After such a speech, but damned few will be taken prisoners — that I know."

Having marched till eleven o'clock, our advance reported that the enemy had taken the New-Washington road. Orders were then given to halt. Rifle in hand, I then lay down alongside of a log, without cloak or blanket. The ground was wet, and as I was cold and shivering, a cold norther having chilled the night air, I was truly grateful for a share of Dr. Ewing's blanket, as he lay down by my side. As we knew not what moment an attack might be made, we passed a comfortless and sleepless night, without supper and with our rifles under our heads to be ready at a moment's warning.

Daybreak finally dawned. Slowly crawling out, I perceived all was silent, the guard only standing around a small fire, awaiting the return of the spies. By and by the sleepers arose, and by six o'clock we were again on our march towards Lynchburg. Having passed a small bayou, orders were given to halt for breakfast. Our guns were stacked, and three cows that happened to be near by were shot down, and immediately large numbers started off for wood to kindle fires. . . .

At this moment, the spies were seen coming in a gallop, when the word was given: "To arms, to your arms!"

Upon examining our rifles, we found they required fresh priming, and then one after another discharged his gun for the purpose of loading afresh, making a perfect roar of musketry, till over four hundred were fired across the bayou. General Houston, who had all along been silent, now raised his stentorian voice, crying: "Stop that firing, stop that firing. God damn you, I say, stop the firing." Some of us said, "Our guns have been loaded over two weeks and we will not meet the enemy with them wet;" and then, right before his face, bang went another, and still another. By this time, raising himself up to his full height, and holding his drawn sword, he declared he would run through the first man that would fire. One man close by myself said, "General, it won't do for you to try that game on us;" and with the most perfect indifference, he fired his rifle as he spoke. The general then gave it up.

After reloading and repriming, the march was continued, and soon a smoke was discovered in the distance. The general pointed it out to me, remarking: "Can that be the prairie on fire?" I replied that the heavy dew and light rain of the night would not permit the prairie to burn so early in the morning, and suggested that, from the direction, it must be New-Washington on fire; and soon we all became convinced that the enemy had set fire to the buildings of that place, and that the advance now coming had been sent to prepare the way for crossing at Lynchburg; and a guard was therefore at once ordered to defend that point.

At about ten o'clock we entered the timber and pitched our camp on the bank of the bayou. This was the 20th of April. The companies had scarcely taken their ground, our cannon being placed in the edge of the timber, when the enemy was seen from the rising ground before us, apparently preparing their camping-ground. . . .

About one o'clock, Colonel Sherman came riding up in advance of the mounted men, with whom he had been reconnoitering, informing General Houston that the enemy were close by; and directly after, the enemy's cavalry was observed in motion, passing through the prairie about a mile, when, striking our trail, they advanced towards us in fine order with trumpets sounding. As the dragoons approached, over sixty of us stood before our two pieces of artillery; and as the music became louder and more piercing as it came nearer, Houston showed himself restless and uneasy, walking backward and forward, casting his eyes toward the cannon and toward the advancing enemy. Nearly all the men lay flat on the grass, to hide our force as much as possible. In the stillness of that moment, not a word nor a whisper was heard, nothing save the still more pene-

The final stages of the Battle of San Jacinto, as rendered by Henry McArdle, showing Santa Anna's forces in full retreat. McArdle's lush version of the lady on the battle flag at the extreme left was the result of rumor; he had never seen the more modest original (for the real thing, see page 26).

trating sounds of the instruments and the thrilling notes of the bugle.

J. N. Moreland and Captain Neill commanded the cannon. "Moreland," said Houston, "are you ready?"

"It is not time yet," said Moreland. "They are too far."

I was on intimate terms with Moreland, and we were messmates, and thinking the guns were too much elevated, I observed to him they should be lowered more; but before they were sufficiently lowered, the word was given by Houston, "Clear the guns and fire!" but no execution was done except to cause the cavalry to wheel to the right, and regain the main body. Great was the disappointment among our men in being thus cheated of the expected fight, and now all were eager to attack the enemy on his own ground. . . .

Soon after, the enemy advanced his twelve-pound brass piece to an island of oaks, nearly half-way between the two armies, and began to throw grape-shot at us; but fortunately the shot passed over us, now and then cutting the limbs of the trees, which fell among us, while the shot fell in the bayou and on the opposite bank. Our small pieces returned the fire, and, profiting from our first blunder, their muzzles were lowered, till we could see every shot count.

The enemy then withdrew their artillery, and the fire ceased. Our cannon had been exchanging shots with that of the enemy during the day. About four o'clock in the evening Colonel Sherman asked General Houston's permission to call for mounted volunteers to take [the Mexican] cannon, as it was some distance from their main body and supported by their cavalry amounting to about 100 men. Colonel Sherman was of the opinion he could beat off their cavalry and run their cannon into our camp before they could get a reinforcement. General Houston reluctantly consented; but before Colonel Sherman could get his men ready for the attack (about seventy having volunteered, among them were Colonels Lamar and Handy), the enemy withdrew their cannon, leaving their cavalry in the prairie.

Sherman immediately charged them and drove them back under the guns of their main body. The Texians, being composed mostly of riflemen mounted for the purpose, were compelled to fall back and dismount, to

reload their long rifles. The enemy, perceiving their condition, dashed down upon them, forcing them to defend themselves as best they could until they were again in their saddles, when they forced the enemy back the second time.

In the mean time Santa Anna, who had been watching the fight and constantly directing his orderly bugler to sound, *"Give no quarter!"* ordered out several hundred infantry to cut off the retreat of the Texians. The consequence was, Sherman, with only about seventy mounted men, contended some time with their cavalry, several hundred infantry, and their artillery, which was constantly pouring in grape-shot. While in this situation, Sherman sent Major Wells to bring up Colonel Willard's command of regulars, which had been promised him by Houston, to engage their infantry while he was contending with their cavalry. Wells soon returned with the mortifying intelligence that Willard's orders had been countermanded, remarking that he must get out of the scrape the best way he could. Of course, the Texians were compelled to retreat. Their loss was three men wounded and several horses killed.... Thus ended the skirmishing of the 20th.

The number of our men in camp was quite small, having diminished from sixteen hundred on the Colorado to what we now estimated at less than eight hundred; yet all were confident, as every man believed himself equal to four of the enemy....

The morning of the ever memorable 21st of April dawned and exhibited many cheerful and animated faces, though some presented an expression of despondency. All were seen exchanging opinions as to what was best to do, and all were of the same mind, the common expression being: "Let us attack the enemy and give them hell at once!" An immediate and hand-to-hand fight was the desire of all the men.

Breakfast was hardly over (with those who had any, for some had little or nothing to eat) when our spies reported a large number of mules in sight, with pack-saddles on. And now there was a general murmur, for most agreed that it was a re-inforcement to the enemy, though others insisted that these mules had strayed from the enemy's camp, and were now only being driven back. As Colonel Lynch had a small spy-glass, we walked at least a quarter of a mile into the prairie, and we plainly saw the soldiers walking by the side of the pack-mules, and judged the mules to number about two hundred. Houston declared it was only a sham and no re-inforcement. Yet many became clamorous, and murmurs were heard to the effect that: "The delays of our commander are continually adding strength to the enemy and diminishing our own; yesterday they had 500; today they have 1500, and tomorrow they will have 6000. Today, we *must* fight, or never!"

At about ten that morning Colonel Wharton visited every mess in camp, and, slapping his hands together, he spoke loud and quick: "Boys, there is no other word today but fight, fight! Now is the time!"

Every man was eager for it, but all feared another disappointment, as the commander still showed no disposition whatever to lead the men out. Over one-half the men paraded, expecting orders, but up to noon nothing could be decided... until finally, Houston said to Wharton: "Fight, and be damned!"

This was enough. Wharton again went among the men to prepare them, telling them the order had been given at last — that it was now decided. It was past three o'clock when all the arrangements were finally concluded. The music struck up a lively air as we bid good-by to our camp.

We found the enemy somewhat unprepared for us at that hour [it was *siesta* time]. Our men, having marched half the distance in single file, were then formed into parallel lines and ordered to advance.... I had hardly reached my postion, when a rifle discharge from the 2d Regiment (the left wing) was heard, followed by a discharge from the rest — the cannon roared, and a general engagement ensued, amid showers of bullets. I observed General Rusk, accompanied by Dr. Mott, riding in full gallop on the rear and coming towards the left.

On a sudden a halt is made in obedience to an order [from Houston]. Upon which Rusk shouts to the top of his voice: "If we stop we are cut to pieces. Don't stop — go ahead — give them hell!"

A moment after, and the writer with four others [found himself] within twenty yards of some of the enemy's cavalry.... As they wheeled to retreat, we saw our shots tell on them effectively. We reloaded and ran some twenty yards to fire, and this was repeated some four or five times, when we found ourselves in the midst of the enemy's baggage, from which they were running for life. A young man by my side received a ball in the hip, which caused him to fall against me. A Mexican soldier at that instant received four balls through him, standing not ten yards from where we stood. Having pursued the enemy into the woods, we found many had

William H. Huddle's 1886 version of the surrender of Santa Anna is a gallery of San Jacinto heroes, with careful portraits of more than thirty participants (including the ubiquitous "Deaf" Smith cocking an ear toward the proceedings). The wounded Sam Houston outlines terms of surrender to the frail, blue-jacketed "Napoleon of the West," who appears singularly vulnerable to a few soldiers intent upon a hanging party.

thrown themselves into the bayou, having only their heads above water. It was here that one or two women were killed by someone aiming at their heads, probably mistaking them for men, and two or three others taken prisoners. . . .

Having reached the spot where I left my wounded comrade, I observed General Houston on a bay pony, with his leg over the pommel of the saddle. "Doctor," said he, "I am glad to see you; are you hurt?"

"Not at all," said I.

"Well," he rejoined, "I have had two horses shot under me, and have received a ball in my ankle, but am not badly hurt."

"Do you wish to have it dressed?" said I.

"Oh! no, not now, but will when I get back to the camp. I can stand it well enough till then." He then faced his horse about and ordered the drum to beat a retreat. But the men, paying no attention to the order, shouted with expressions of exultation over the glorious victory, and it was difficult to hear anything distinctly. . . . Houston, seeing he could not restore order, cried at the top of his voice: "Gentlemen! gentlemen! gentlemen!" (a momentary stillness ensues) "gentlemen! I applaud your bravery, but damn your manners."

He then turned his horse towards the baggage-depot, when Colonel Wharton came up to us and spoke to Houston in a low voice, pointing in various directions as if showing what he thought should be done, when Houston, turning and looking him full in the face, said: "Colonel Wharton, you have commanded long enough; damn you, go about your business." Wharton made no reply, but taking a gourd of water hanging at the pommel of his saddle, drank copiously and then rode off, while Houston rode to Colonel Turner's company, to whom he gave some orders.

It had now become quite dark, and I returned with Dr. Fitzhue to our camp, where I found a crowd of prisoners well guarded, and towards them were pointed the twelve-pound brass cannon, taken that day, and the "Twin Sisters," all loaded and prepared to pour destruction upon the dispirited prisoners.

WHILST I WAS laboriously occupied in dressing the wounds of the prisoners (I think it was the third day after the battle), Mr. Sylvester, a young printer who had come out with Colonel Sherman from Cincinnati, rode up with his rifle on his left shoulder and conducting a prisoner. The sentinel, as usual, was about admitting the prisoner, who refused to come in, whereupon Mr. Sylvester called to me: "Dr. Labadie, what does this

man want?" He desired me to interpret for his prisoner; and so I arose, and addressing the man, I told him in Spanish, this was the place where all the prisoners were kept.

He replied that he wanted to see General Houston. "Is he in camp?" said he.

"Yes," I replied. "Mr. Sylvester, take this man to yonder oak-tree" (pointing towards the bayou) "where General Houston lies."

As they left, I observed that all the Mexican officers arose at once, and a wounded lieutenant whispered to me: "*Est* [*sic*] *El Presidente*." At once I folded up my instruments and followed after them, and met Colonel Hockley calling me to come quickly, as I was wanted. Having arrived at the spot, I found Houston lying on his back; and on his left was the prisoner, sitting on a chest. He politely returned my salute, and I said to him, pointing: "This is General Houston: do you want anything of him?"

He replied: "Tell General Houston that General Santa Anna stands before him, a prisoner."

Houston, having heard the words interpreted, appeared much surprised; and turning on his left side, he said: "General Santa Anna, in what condition do you surrender yourself?"

"A prisoner of war," said he. . . ."Tell General Houston that I am tired of blood and war, and have seen enough of this country to know that the two people cannot live under the same laws, and I am willing to treat with him as to the boundaries of the two countries."

In reply General Houston said: "Tell him I cannot treat with him; but the cabinet that is in Galveston will make a treaty with him." . . .

As Santa Anna had proposed to treat for peace, Colonel Rusk said: "Filisola, I learn, is coming and is near by, and we will have to give him battle."

"No," said Santa Anna, "I will order him to return."

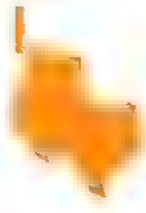
"No," said Rusk, "order him to deliver up himself and army as prisoners of war."

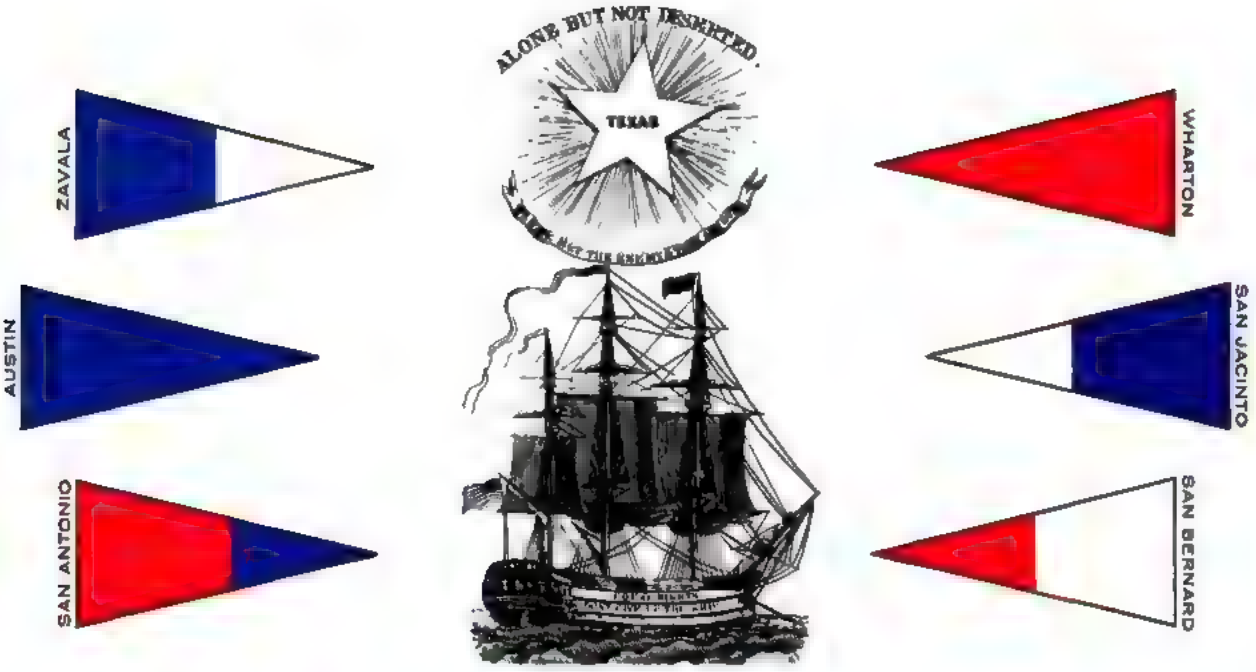
"Ho!" said he. . . . "You have whipped me, I am your prisoner; but Filisola is not whipped. He will not surrender as a prisoner of war. You must whip him first. But if I give him orders to leave the limits of Texas, he will do it, he will do it." It was then agreed, he should issue the order. It was suggested, whether it would not be better to issue his order on official stamped paper. He remarked: "It would be better." Houston then requested Hockley to have the paper procured. . . .

At last, finding things wore a rather favorable aspect, [Santa Anna] began to extend his look upon the crowd, which he had not before done. He then inquired if Cos had escaped. When told he was a prisoner, he then asked after another, then another, and finally after Castrion. He was answered by Alsbury: "Castrion lies dead on the field." He bowed his head, paused, and said no more.

While Dr. Labadie was as proud of the victory as any of his unruly and uninhibited comrades, he received a shock when he returned to Anahuac after the campaign: one of his children had died of sickness, his house had been pillaged and burned, and all his cattle killed. He and the surviving members of his family almost starved to death during the famine that followed the Texan victory. Already worn down by exhaustion and exposure endured in the field, the doctor fell ill and "was deprived of all consciousness" for a time, only to find on his recovery that he had lost his hearing. To relieve the needs of his family, he "sold" his pay and discharge, which amounted to $300, for $24 in immediate cash. All told, throughout the unpleasantness with Mexico, Labadie figured that he had lost about $1,100, not counting three horses that the Texas government had confiscated while he was fighting and for which he received no compensation. All this was the price one Canadian immigrant paid for an independent Texas.

Stephen B. Oates, General Editor of this anthology on the Republic of Texas, is the author of such books on Texas and the Southwest as *Confederate Cavalry West of the River, Rip Ford's Texas,* and *Narratives of the American Southwest.* He is currently completing a major study of John Brown.





THE TEXAS NAVY

Los Diablos Tejanos on the High Seas

BY JOHN H. JENKINS

TEXAN NAVAL FORCES played a vital role in the winning of independence from Mexico. The first battle of the Texas Revolution was a naval one, and the last battle before annexation by the United States was a naval engagement as well. In spite of the writings of land-oriented historians during the past hundred years, a case can actually be made for the claim that Texas won her independence and maintained it as long as she did because of her naval forces and their extraordinary record.

In August, 1835, Stephen F. Austin boarded the trim schooner *San Felipe* to return to Texas after eighteen months' imprisonment in Mexico. For four years he had tried in vain to prevent an open break between his colonies in Texas and the faraway government in Mexico. Now, discouraged by his recent treatment in Mexico, he was almost ready to yield to the war party's demands for independence.

As the *San Felipe* neared the mouth of the Brazos River, her captain, W. A. Hurd, noticed the Mexican revenue cutter *Correo* firing on a small Texas vessel near shore. He approached to investigate. Abruptly and without warning, the *Correo* opened fire on the *San Felipe*. Warning Austin to keep down, Hurd returned the fire, and a heated battle raged throughout the afternoon. Before sunset, however, the *Correo* unfurled a white flag and surrendered. Austin was furious; for him, it was the last straw. He ordered Hurd to escort the *Correo* to New Orleans and there to arrange for an admiralty court to try her crew for piracy.

Felix Huston, later commanding general of the Texas Army, pleaded the Texas claims; and Pierre Soule, a famous Louisiana lawyer and statesman, defended the Mexicans. Soule and Huston's courtroom arguments became so heated that they began to throw ink stands and books at each other. The judge released the Mexican officers and crew, but sentenced both Soule and Huston to terms in jail.

The *Correo-San Felipe* battle was of no small significance. It aroused Mexican officialdom as did no other incident prior to that date. Mexican newspapers discussed the affair heatedly for weeks. The battle was just what Santa Anna was looking for: he now had an excuse for sending troops to Texas, and ordered his brother-in-law, General Cos, to march to San Antonio. Thus, a naval fracas marked the beginning of the Texas Revolution. In the words of Jim Dan Hill, one of the few historians to realize the significance of Texas naval affairs, it was, "in fact, the opening shot of the Texan struggle for independence."

Texans met in general council, planned for a new government, and, with Austin in command, laid siege to Cos's forces in San Antonio de Bexar. Preparations were made for an organized army and navy. Austin, realizing that Texas was unprepared for the coming revolution, left his command to Colonel William Travis and departed for the United States with two other commissioners in order to raise funds to buy arms, enlist volunteers, and purchase a navy.

A navy was vital for two reasons. First, the sea lanes between New Orleans and Texas would have to be kept open at all costs in order for volunteers and supplies to reach Texas. Second, a navy would be necessary to prevent an invasion of Texas by sea. Moreover, while it was possible to bring an army into Texas across the hundreds of miles of barren plains, the logistics of any extended campaign for a large army could only be maintained by sea.

In January Santa Anna began his march northward to invade Texas. His second-in-command, General Vicente Filisola, argued strongly against sending six thousand soldiers into Texas by land without sufficient supplies, but Santa Anna was sure that the Mexican navy could keep his troops supplied at various points. In fact, he intended to return to Mexico by sea after carrying the campaign across Texas to Galveston or the Sabine River.

Santa Anna's plan was, as events proved, a serious strategic mistake. Assuming that the United States remained neutral, the Mexican schooners *Bravo* and *Veracruzana*, would be in complete control of the Gulf of Mexico west of New Orleans. Santa Anna ordered these two vessels to cruise between Matamoros at the mouth of the Rio Grande and various points along the Texas coast in order to bring supplies and provisions as he required them. Accordingly throughout January and February of 1836 the two strong vessels acted as supply ships.

Had they instead taken advantage of the fact that Texas as yet had no effective navy and attacked shipping between New Orleans and Galveston, they could have done untold damage to the Texas cause. But Santa Anna thought the campaign would be short, and he wanted his ships ready to take him home when he tired of punishing the Texans.

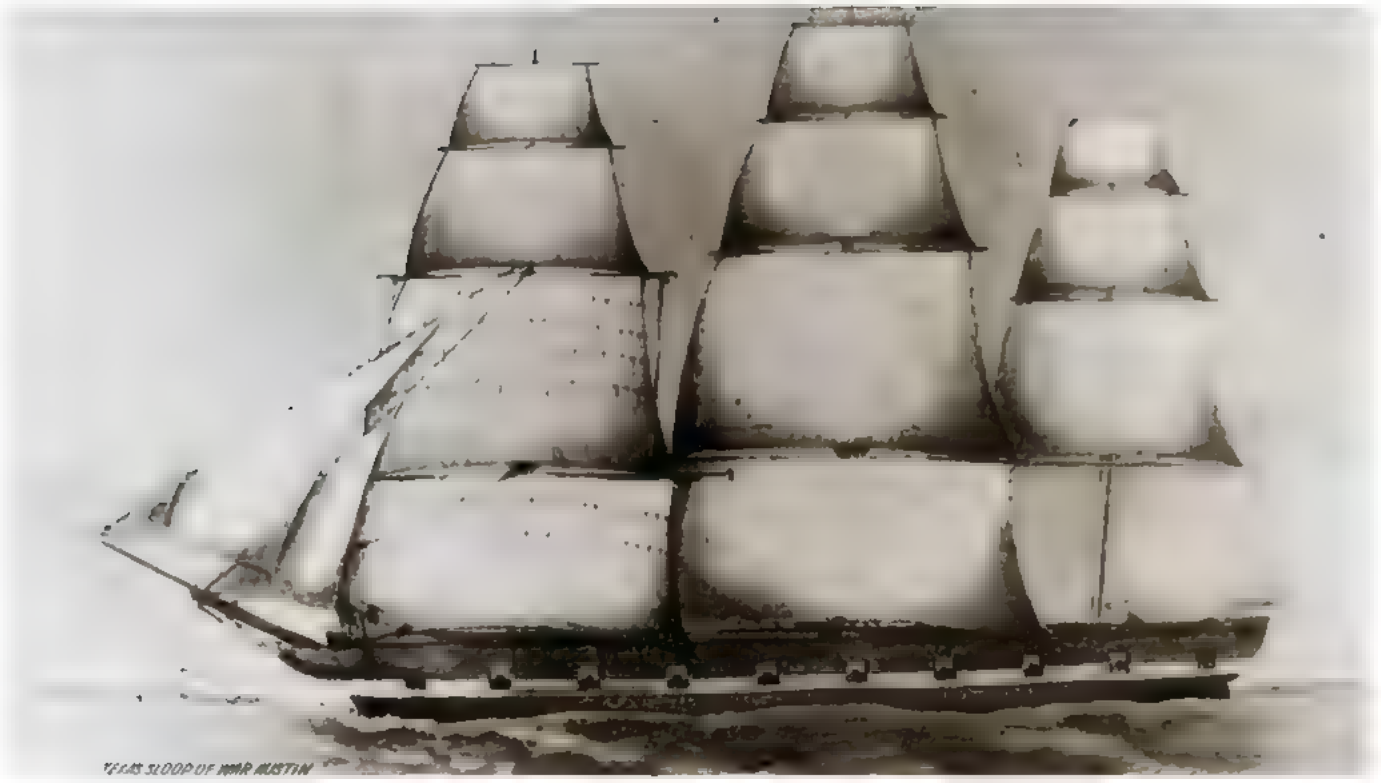
Thus, Austin and the commissioners had an open route to send men and supplies to Texas. The commissioners provided well for Texas' future naval operations. Letters of marque had already been granted, but Austin purchased four sturdy schooners as the foundation for a regular navy: the 60-ton *Liberty*, the 125-ton *Invincible*, the 125-ton *Independence*, and the 125-ton *Brutus*. Austin spent more hard cash on the navy than on anything else.

Meanwhile, Santa Anna arrived at San Antonio, successfully invested the Alamo, and killed all its defenders, then headed slowly eastward across Texas. But the Alamo defenders bought precious time with their lives. Not only was Sam Houston able to organize a Texas army, but he managed to launch a navy as well.

The Republic of Texas Navy was placed under the command of Captain Charles Hawkins, who dispatched Captain William S. Brown in the *Liberty* to run up and down the north Mexican coast in order to force the Mexican fleet to remain in that area of the Gulf. On March 3, 1836, Brown attacked the Mexican schooner *Pelicano* at Sisal, killed seven of her crewmen, and captured the rest, except for a few who "capitulated by way of the ship's rail and a brisk swim for the shore." The cargo, consisting of flour and foodstuffs, was taken to Matagorda. When the flour barrels were opened, a large cache of rifles and ammunition was found hidden inside — to the great satisfaction of General Houston.

Santa Anna's land campaign was taking much longer than he expected. Too many of his troops had been lost at the Alamo, and, by late March, supplies were dangerously low. Some two thousand more troops and a vast quantity of supplies had been gathering at Matamoros for shipment by sea to Copano or Matagorda. From there they would be sent to Santa Anna.

On March 12, the *Invincible* sailed, under Captain Jeremiah Brown. She arrived at the mouth of the Rio Grande on April 3 and attacked the *Bravo* just as the Mexican troop and supply transfer was about to embark. In the midst of the battle there appeared on the horizon "the square fore royal of a sizeable brig." Both Brown



Sloop-of-war Austin, *flagship of the Texas Navy: commissioned 1839, six hundred tons, thirty-eight guns. A sketch by Midshipman Edward Johns.*

and the Mexican commander, José Espino, were suspicious and backed off while it approached. Brown then made for the brig and captured it after a short encounter. It turned out to be an American ship, the *Pocket*, and it was loaded to the brim with contraband smuggled from New Orleans for the Mexican army.

The redoubtable Brown turned back to the timid *Bravo* and captured it as well. The ships were escorted to Matagorda, and their cargoes rushed to the retreating Texas army.

At about the same time the *Liberty*, also cruising, captured the brig *Durango* with a similar contraband cargo. The *Independence* sparred with several Mexican vessels, including the *Urrea*. In a few short weeks the little Texas navy had gained control of the Gulf. The Mexican troops and supplies were stranded at Matamoros, unable to embark, and Santa Anna was without supply.

Santa Anna then made his worst mistake of the campaign. He took a detachment of 750 men from his main army and dashed towards Harrisburg, hoping to capture President Burnet and the Texas cabinet. In a hairbreadth escape Burnet and his fellow officials managed to escape on board the *Flash*. In anger, Santa Anna burned Harrisburg to the ground, and delayed there hoping to receive supplies. Lulled by the retreating Texans, he still felt the campaign had been won, and was enraged that no ships were waiting for him on the coast with fresh troops and supplies. Then, learning that there was a warehouse full of supplies at New Washington, he led his army there. Then, dallying along the coast, waiting for his navy, the Napoleon of the West worked his way along Galveston Bay to Lynchburg, at the mouth of the San Jacinto River. There he was literally caught napping by the Texas army on April 21. His entire force was killed or captured, and Santa Anna himself picked up the next day, ending the land campaign.

The glorious news of San Jacinto reached the coast a few hours after the battle ended. Captain Jeremiah Brown heard of the victory first, and informed Captain Hawkins; the two threw a huge celebration for the citizens and refugees on Galveston Island. After the festivities had gone on for half the night, the thought occurred to the two captains that it might be decent to notify the President of the Republic of Texas, David G. Burnet,

who, apparently was the only man on Galveston Island who had not heard the news of the victory.

Navy historian Jim Dan Hill credited the failure of Santa Anna's Texas campaign largely to the Texas navy.

"Whether or not the reader concedes the significance of, and the overwhelming importance of, Texan maritime supremacy in this campaign," Hill wrote, "is beside the point. The important fact is that the fathers of the Texan Republic did."

The battle for the Gulf of Mexico continued into the late spring of 1836. News of the defeat at San Jacinto was slow in reaching Mexico, and loaded vessels still sailed into Texas waters to carry supplies to El Presidente.

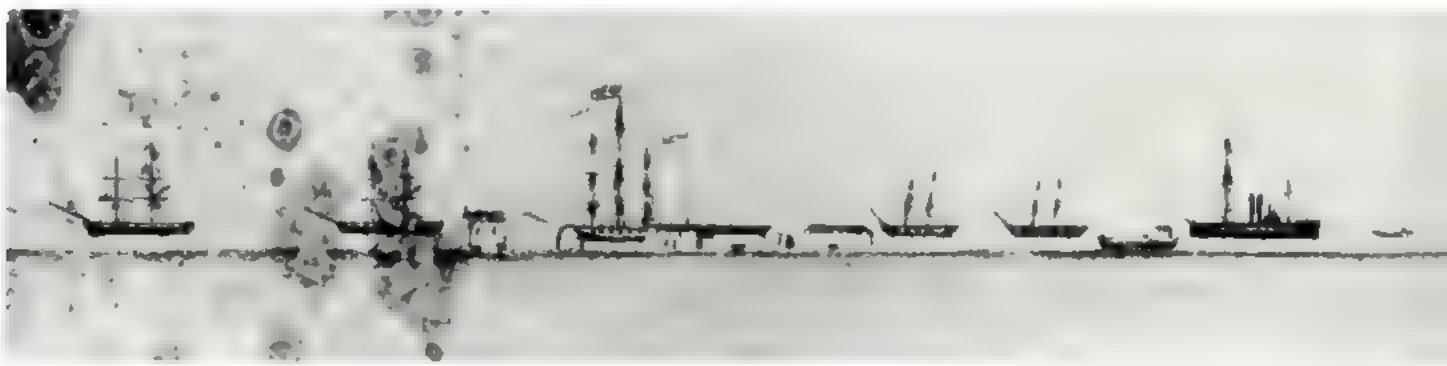
On June 2, Major I. W. Burton and about thirty Texas rangers noticed a suspicious vessel lying off the coast near Copano. Burton hid most of his men in the brush and had two or three others run out on the beach giving distress signals. The vessel hoisted Texas colors, but got no response from the men on shore. Then she raised the Stars and Stripes. Again, no response. Finally, up came the Mexican colors, and Burton's men jumped about and cheered. The captain of the schooner—the *Watchman*—then sent a boat ashore, which the Texans quickly captured. Sixteen of the rangers rowed back to the ship and opened fire on the astonished Mexicans with their squirrel rifles, while the rest of the rangers rode horseback into the water to assist. Within a few minutes they had taken charge of the vessel. Delighted with their new acquisition, Burton and his men sailed about for a few days. Sighting two other Mexican schooners, they used the same ruse and captured the two vessels, the *Comanche* and the *Fanny Butler*, just as they had the *Watchman*.

Thereupon, with Texas colors flying, Major Burton and his "horse marines," as they were quickly dubbed, sailed joyfully into Galveston harbor. Their three prizes were all heavily laden with supplies intended for the Mexican army. The incident became celebrated in American naval history and gave rise to the famous ditty about "Captain Jinx and His Horse Marines."

SUMMER CAME AND TEXAS still controlled the Gulf. The Mexican Secretary of War and Marine, Tornel, fitted out a heavy brig, the *Vencedor del Alamo*, and sent it to the Texas coast to escort the three supply schooners back to Mexico, unaware of their capture by Burton's horse marines. She came upon the *Brutus* at anchor across from Galveston, and closed for battle. Noticing what was about to occur, some Texans along the coast rushed aboard a private steamer, the *Ocean*. They piled cotton bales on one end, and, accompanied by assorted small sailing vessels, headed for the Mexican brig. The Mexicans were baffled by this makeshift armada and backed off, allowing the *Ocean* time to tow the *Brutus* into deeper waters, where she could maneuver. The *Brutus* then made for the Mexican brig, which turned and ran, with the *Brutus* in pursuit, all the way to Vera Cruz. There most of the Mexican Navy lay in the harbor. The *Brutus* sallied back and forth, blockading Vera Cruz but failing to lure any of the ships out to give her battle.

Summer passed, and the Texas navy not only controlled the Gulf, but had successfully blockaded Mexico's major harbor as well. The Texas government called in her navy for repairs. The *Invincible* and the *Brutus* were sent to New York; the *Liberty*, which had escorted Houston, the wounded hero of San Jacinto, to New Orleans, remained docked there. Repairs were made on the *Liberty*, but Texas was unable to pay for them and

A pencil sketch of the Texas Navy at Galveston, 1841.



SAN JACINTO MUSEUM OF HISTORY ASSOCIATION

the ship was sold to the highest bidder. The *Independence* lay idle in New Orleans harbor, because Captain Hawkins had died of smallpox.

But Texas was by no means secure. Santa Anna repudiated the treaties of Velasco, and planned another major campaign into Texas in 1837, including a massive invasion by sea. Unaware that the Texas coast was unprotected, however, Tornel held back nearly ten thousand troops at Matamoros until he could build up a navy to thwart *los diablos Tejanos* on the high seas. While he waited, the *Invincible* and the *Brutus* returned from New York in early summer and, with increased funding from the Texas Congress, began one of the most successful cruises in Texas naval history, capturing six Mexican vessels and—momentarily, at least—raising the Texan flag at Alacranes and on the island of Cozumel.

On August 26, the two ships returned to the waters off Galveston, where they encountered two Mexican brigs-of-war; they attacked immediately, but before the battle could be resolved heavy winds grounded the Texas ships. The Mexican brigs limped away to Matamoros the winds developed into a full-scale norther, and the *Invincible* and the *Brutus* were destroyed. The disaster marked the end of the first Texas Navy and left the Gulf coast unprotected.

By then, the devastating panic of 1837, which ultimately affected all three republics—the United States, Texas, and Mexico—put a damper on any plans for a major campaign in Texas by the Mexicans. Shortly afterward, Mexico became hopelessly embroiled in a war with France that disrupted an already unstable political situation and ultimately cost her $600,000 and the loss of what was left of her navy. The period of relative peace gave Texas a chance to rebuild her strength, as reported in a letter from the Texan Secretary of State to his minister in Paris: "You may say in truth to all, that Texas is prospering to an extent that no one could have reasonably anticipated. . . ."

It was not until the spring of 1839, however, that either Texas or Mexico had reconstructed their navies sufficiently to enable them to meet once again in battle.

THE FIRST SHIP of the new Texas navy was the steam packet *Zavala*, with ten guns, a complement of 126 men, and a top speed of 16 knots. It was ready in March of 1839, and was soon joined by the 170-ton schooners *San Jacinto*, *San Antonio*, and *San Bernard*, the 300-ton brig *Wharton*, and the 600-ton sloop-of-war *Austin*. President Lamar appointed a bright young former United States naval lieutenant, Edwin W. Moore, as commodore of the new navy.

Moore, an excellent choice for commodore, set out aggressively to build up the fleet and to entice able seamen from the United States to join.

The new fleet sailed in June of 1840, cruising first to Yucatan, where a revolt against the Mexican government was brewing. Negotiations between President Lamar and Yucatan revolutionaries began, but Commodore Moore was ordered not to fire on any Mexican vessel unless attacked first. Lamar was hoping that the peace mission of James Treat to Mexico would result in recognition of Texas independence. By October Treat realized that the Mexicans were delaying in order to buy time to build up their naval forces.

Meanwhile, the Texas Congress, apparently considering the navy unnecessary, cut naval appropriations drastically although much money had been spent on the new fleet. Moore was forced to use his personal credit to borrow money to keep the navy afloat. In September, 1841, he arranged to protect the Yucatan coast in return for $8,000 per month paid to the Texas navy. Mexicans were supporting the Texas fleet!

Commodore Moore sailed from Galveston on December 13, 1841, the last day of Lamar's administration. Houston was inaugurated for a second term that same day, and immediately issued orders recalling the navy. Houston had no knowledge of naval affairs and disliked the new commodore. The orders were several months reaching Moore, who did not return until May, 1842, after a successful cruise. By sheer force of will the young commodore had maintained complete control of the Gulf of Mexico for two years, during which time his biggest enemy seemed to be the Texas Congress itself.

By this time Mexico had invaded Texas for the first time since 1836. General Rafael Vasquez made a raid as far as San Antonio, molested a few citizens, and retired across the border. Houston, inexplicably, ordered a general blockade of the Mexican coast but refused to allow Moore and the navy to sail. Moore went to New Orleans and tried again to raise money on his own credit to put the fleet in condition to sail.

By now Moore had made a relentless enemy of Sam Houston, but, by virtue of his efforts in the young republic's behalf, had endeared himself to the Texas populace. In the United States he was admired for his courage, and even the Mexicans were envious of his

Ships of the Texas Navy sketched by Midshipman Alfred Walke, 1842.

efforts. General Arrangoiz reported to his government that Moore was "a man of extraordinary activity, has much talent, and strength of character." In New Orleans a ball was given for Moore by American citizens there, including General E. P. Gaines and Henry Clay. Merchants in New Orleans accepted Moore's signature for credit at the very time they were refusing Sam Houston himself.

Another raid was made on Texas in the fall of 1842. It became apparent that, if Mexico could resolve her troubles in Yucatan, she would attempt an all-out invasion of Texas early in 1843. Daniel Webster sent an urgent warning to Texas in December, 1842, that Mexico would send a large naval invasion within a few months. British minister Packenham made the same prediction. Texas began slowly to mobilize her military forces, but seemed unaware of the importance of her navy.

Then, on January 16, 1843, the Texas Congress, in an extraordinary secret session, passed an act to disband the navy entirely and to sell all of her ships. Houston possibly hoped that the defenseless position of Texas would draw the United States into the struggle.

Moore, meanwhile, had renewed his agreement with Yucatan, thereby allowing the navy to support itself without any additional funds from Texas. Until direct orders were given to the contrary, he intended to keep afloat. President Houston sent Samuel May Williams, William Bryant, and James Morgan to New Orleans secretly to inform Commodore Moore of the action of Congress; Houston was apparently unaware that Moore knew they were coming and was about to set sail for Yucatan. When they arrived, Moore convinced them of the folly of selling the navy at that time, and Colonel Morgan, in spite of Congress, agreed to sail with Moore so that any blame would fall on the commissioners as well as on the commodore.

Morgan later wrote that he felt there could be no harm in bringing the navy back to Texas by a circuitous route.

I felt justified in taking the Coast of Yucatan on our way. The fact was, I found our vessels in such apple pie order—the officers so anxious to proceed on the Cruise—such bully crews: and knowing if the vessels did go into Galveston Harbor they would never come out again as *Texas* vessels—if at all—For these and other still more cogent reasons, I concluded to stretch my authority as Commissioner, a little, and authorize Com. Moore to go ahead.

The other commissioners agreed.

The fleet sailed on April 19, 1843. Daniel Webster told Isaac Van Zandt a few days later that "the favorable or unfavorable termination of that [Yucatan naval] campaign would determine the ability or inability of Mexico to reinvade Texas."

In May, the Texans encountered the Mexican fleet, which included two new steam warships, the *Guadaloupe* and the *Montezuma*, built for Mexico by England; one of these, remarkably, was an ironclad. A ferocious battle ensued and Moore's men conducted themselves with distinction. Morgan, who was aboard the flagship, recorded:

The way we knocked H-ll into them & out of them was a caution. We thrashed them soundly & the whole fleet ran off. . . . I could not imagine more coolness & determination than was displayed by the Officers & crew in the fight—all appeared delighted & the young middys & powder boys made a perfect Jubilee of the affair! For my own part I had much rather been at a feast—For D–n me if I saw any fun in it! I summoned up courage enough to keep on the deck during the action to be sure & like a frightened child who will make a noise to keep fear away—I huzzaed for Texas most of the time as loud as I could howl: but I could not help *bowing* instinctively to the enemy's 68 lb shot as they came over my head—They did command that respect out of me! . . . . I expect "Old Sam" will *"hang me"* for I have travelled out of the course his instructions dictated. But as we have played h-ll with the enemys arrangements and calculations in this quarter He may be afraid & overlook the matter.

The battle was clearly a Texas victory. Moore lost five men killed, and the Mexicans lost, by their own admission, eighty-seven killed and many more wounded. No ships were sunk, but Moore chased the two steamers back to port and so badly damaged the rest of the Mexican vessels that there could be no possibility of any invasion of Texas by sea for some time to come. It was the last battle, on land or sea, before the annexation of Texas by the United States.

When Sam Houston learned that Moore and the commissioners had left New Orleans, he exploded with fury. The next day he declared Moore a pirate and ordered him dismissed from the service.

Houston's action was illegal, as Texas law required an open court martial before an officer could be dismissed. But as soon as Moore heard of Houston's order, he set a course for Galveston and arrived there with his fleet on July 14, 1843. He tried to surrender himself to the Texas authorities, but instead of arrest, a hero's welcome awaited the commodore. Balls in his honor were planned, and Houston was burned in effigy.

Moore passed quickly on to the capital, where Houston met him with a dishonorable discharge. Command was offered to the next ranking officer, but not a single officer in the entire navy would accept the position, so loyal were the junior officers to their commodore. The sailing master, Daniel Lloyd, finally agreed to take command.

Moore appealed to Congress and was granted a trial. Houston appointed three of his closest friends to sit as judges, but when the evidence had been heard, Moore was not only acquitted, but also commended for his actions. Congress then belatedly passed resolutions honoring him, all again having to be passed over Houston's veto.

The sale of the navy proceeded later that year, but the people of Galveston bought all the vessels by public subscription and gave them back to Texas, so that the navy remained intact. However, throughout the remainder of Houston's administration and that of his successor, Anson Jones, Commodore Moore was prevented from activating the navy again. It did not matter; by this time the United States was negotiating the terms of annexation and had sent its own naval forces to protect the coast of Texas. When annexation did take place, the Texas navy was incorporated *en masse* into that of the United States.

John H. Jenkins is a writer-historian whose books include *Cracker Barrel Chronicles*, *Honest Bob and the Texas Congress*, and *Recollections of Early Texas*. He is editor-publisher of the Pemberton Press of Austin, Texas, and a Fellow of the Texas State Historical Association.

BY WAYNE GARD

LIFE in the Land of BEGINNING AGAIN

It is the most Perfect Purgatory . . .

CUTTING POLITICAL AND MILITARY TIES with Mexico did not at once smooth the rough edges of frontier life in Texas. In common with pioneer settlers on the prairies and plains to the north and on the Pacific Coast, early Texans lived close to hardship and danger. Now they had their own government; but it was hard-put to protect them from redskin scalpers, animal predators, and the calamities of an erratic climate. Life often was harsh, yet it attracted the adventurous and restless; and land-hungry families from the United States continued to migrate to Texas to make a new start. In the period of the Republic, slightly less than a decade, Texas population grew from about 50,000 to an estimated 125,000. Settlers from the Old South poured in by covered wagon through the Louisiana swamps or by ship from New Orleans and other ports. Those from the Midwest went down the Mississippi to New Orleans and thence by coastal ship, or drove their wagons over the Texas Road through the eastern edge of the Indian country.

Newcomers had a wide choice of cheap land. Farmers could obtain free headrights, the size varying with the years. In addition, some incoming settlers had bought Texas land script in the States at fifty cents an acre. Other land could be bought from earlier colonization grants or bounties given for military service. But buyers needed to be wary of fraudulent grants that some Texans were ready to palm off on the unsuspecting.

The scarcity of money was a problem. Since the Republic had no banks and issued only paper notes, the only coins were those of the United States, Spain, and Mexico. With imports exceeding exports, the trade deficit worsened this situation, and soon the paper money issued by the Republic was seriously discounted. The outcome was in many instances a reversion to barter.

Of coin there often was none, recalled one early settler, Noah Smithwick,

> . . . and the constantly downward tendency of the commonwealth paper kept it moving lively. In payment for a horse, I received a hatful of crisp one-dollar bills, which I immediately turned over to a creditor without having folded them. People would rather have almost anything than the commonwealth paper. Horses were considered legal tender; but, owing to the drain by the horse-loving Indian, that kind of currency became scarce, so we settled on the cow.

Life in the rural sections, where most of the people lived, often was so strenuous that only the hardy could survive — and not all of those. Although much of the soil was fertile, such calamities as blizzards, droughts, prairie fires, and clouds of ravenous grasshoppers made it hard to wrest a living from it. Some families, like those of the colony of John Charles Beales on Las Moras Creek, had given up and headed back for their old homes.

As if the frown of Nature were not enough, no one knew when armies from Mexico might march back in an effort to recover what they had lost. Or when Comanche raiders might swoop down on a moonlit night to burn cabins, take scalps, and drive off horses and cattle. Lonely chimneys on the prairie were reminders of homes that had gone up in flames and families that had been wiped out or carried off as prisoners.

There was danger, too, from white renegades. While most of the early settlers were virtuous pioneers seeking to make permanent homes and to prosper through honest efforts, a few were fugitives who had run away from older settlements to escape punishment for crime. They were determined to live by their wits from the work of others, whether that meant robbing stagecoaches, rustling cattle, or stealing horses.

Judge John Summerfield remarked that the Texas frontier was settled by a strange mixture of the enterprising who sought to improve their condition "and the vicious of different grades who desired to escape from the trammels or terrors of the law." Some of the latter would not hesitate to use pistols or bowie knives

on their neighbors if murder suited their purpose.

In some rural sections of the Republic, lack of strict law enforcement led feudists and vigilantes to take the law into their own hands. Near the Neches River, Thomas D. Yocum was one of a band of villains engaged in swindling, murder, and the stealing of cattle, horses, and Negro slaves. Indignant citizens caught him in 1841 and ordered him to leave. When he refused, the vigilantes burned his cabin and captured him at the home of a relative on Cypress Bayou. Later his body, pierced with five bullets, was found on the prairie.

The most persistent and bloodiest feud of the Republic period was the war between the Regulators and the Moderators in and about Shelby County, on the Louisiana border. This conflict arose from land frauds, cattle-rustling, and other crimes. A local ruffian organized his friends into an armed band of Shelby Guards, usually known as the "Regulators." This group, which grew to several hundred, ostensibly was formed to suppress cattle-rustling and horse-thieving; but in practice it inflicted terroristic vengeance on persons suspected of being enemies — by whipping, banishing, and sometimes killing.

The outrages of the Regulators led to the formation of an opposition band known as the "Moderators." The outcome was a local civil war in which large bands made forays and killings. The situation became so serious that many farms and homes were abandoned.

Finally, after three years of skirmishes, President Sam Houston came to San Augustine in 1844 with a large militia force. Sitting on a pile of firewood and whittling a pine stick, he listened to citizens. Then he issued a proclamation and induced the feudists to lay down their arms and return to their homes.

The transition from near-anarchy to statutory justice was not always smooth. When Judge Robert M. Williamson went to Shelbyville to open the first court there, an unkempt ruffian informed him that the citizens wanted no court and had resolved not to have one. "What legal authority," asked the judge, "can you give for such a procedure?"

In answer, the intruder drew a bowie knife from his belt and slammed it on the dry-goods-box bench. "This, sir," he snarled, "is the law of Shelby County."

As quickly, the judge whipped out a long-barreled pistol and placed it beside the knife. "If that is the law of Shelby County," he thundered, "this is the Constitution that overrules your law."

Even in the larger towns, courts were often slow in attaining formal procedure. William Bollaert, an Englishman who visited Texas in the latter days of the Republic, was shocked at the conduct of a Galveston judge. He found the jurist resting his feet on his desk and "chewing his quid" while the lawyers, "ready of speech and loads of references — from Magna Charta upward," chewed, smoked, and whittled.

Texans wishing to travel had little choice of means. Any unable to go on horseback could ride in a jolting wagon or, in some instances, a bumpy stagecoach. Stage lines expanded during the Republic period, but fares were high and muddy roads made schedules uncertain. Men passengers often had to soil their clothes by getting out and using a fence rail to help pry the coach out of the mire. Most of the larger streams had to be crossed by ferry.

Freighting was largely by ox wagon, oxen being cheaper than horses or mules, and easier to keep up since they could live almost entirely on grass. Wagons carried most of the cotton to coastal markets, although some went by riverboats. River traffic increased in the Republic decade, especially on the lower Brazos but also on the Trinity, the Sabine, the Red, and the Rio Grande. Yet the steamers were irregular, often delayed by low water or impeded by snags or sand bars.

Although no locomotive whistle was heard in the Republic, Texans of the period began dreaming of railroads. A railway company was chartered in the fall of 1836, but it succumbed to the financial panic of the next year. Other companies were chartered in 1840, and one began building a line that later became part of the Southern Pacific. A big need for railroads was to allow cotton-growing to push farther inland, beyond the transport limits of wagons and river steamers. Other needs were to carry cattle to distant markets and to provide closer economic and social links with the United States.

Out on the prairies and in the woodlands, life was simple although often rugged. The frontiersman with a good rifle and a sure eye seldom had a food problem. In 1839 Dr. John W. Lockhart found the lower Brazos Valley "the huntsman's paradise. There seemed an almost inexhaustible supply of deer, wild geese, ducks, grouse, and all kinds of aquatic fowl."

Farther north, in what later became Ellis County, Robert F. Mayfield found in 1844 an abundance of white-tailed deer, antelope, wild horses, bears, panthers, wolves, javelinas, and wild turkeys. The buffaloes, he said, "were the great wonder of the prairies. They came and went like a mighty torrent. When they moved rapidly, the earth trembled under their mighty tread." With Petty Apperson, Mayfield once climbed a tall tree to obtain a better view of a buffalo herd. As far as the men could see in every direction, the whole plain was covered with buffaloes.

Most of the buffaloes were in vast herds on the open plains, too far west for convenient hunting by early farm settlers, but deer, wild turkeys, and waterfowl were found almost everywhere. So were bears. Mayfield reported that they "prowled along the thickets and often played with our hogs." He added that fish were plentiful in the creeks and that wild honey was abundant.

Often the diet of game became monotonous, although most farmers had some beef and pork, a patch of corn to provide bread and hominy grits, a cow or two for milk and butter, and a small garden for vegetables, some of which were preserved in the ground for winter use. In the spring, housewives might serve wild greens and sassafras tea. Except for salt, sugar, and coffee, little on the puncheon dinner table came from the stores in town. In some country homes the table was set with pocket knives, cane forks, and gourd cups. Town homes, of course, more likely had good china and silver.

One young man who came to Tyler County in 1845 found the fare too rugged. "I don't see how a man can

The Galveston City Hospital, 1844: Described by a visiting Englishman as "that shell of misery, that great coffin of the unburied dead," the hospital administered to sundry ills common to the Texas frontier, including Asiatic cholera, malaria, yellow fever, and smallpox.

live as you folks do," he said; "... the Ticks, the black Mud, the sand flies, and musketoes — dry beef, black coffee, sweet potatoes ... would ruin me.... It is the most perfect purgatory of any place on the Earth."

The towns had more variety in food, but what was served in some hotels brought complaints. Dr. Francis Moore, Jr., editor of the Houston *Telegraph and Texas Register,* warned in 1840 against "the ill-cooked, unwholesome food" of the taverns as a source of disease. "The heavy, sodden dough-balls, which in the shape of 'hot rolls' are served so plentifully at the hotels, are of themselves sufficient to create the worst of remittent fever, and should be shunned by the hungry traveller as he would shun a charge of grape-shot."

The garb of the frontiersman, like his food, was simple. Noah Smithwick recalled going to a wedding "resplendent in a new buckskin suit consisting of a hunting shirt, pantaloons, and moccasins, all elaborately fringed." Sam Houston, when elected commander of the rebel Texas forces in 1836, wore buckskin breeches and a Mexican blanket. Later he was seen in a hunting shirt of linsey-woolsey checks, a pair of cheap pants, and a broad-brimmed hat of smoky color, with a fur nap half an inch long. At a ball in 1837 he wore a fancy belt and trousers trimmed with gold lace, and a cravat about his neck; but as late as 1841 he appeared in a state procession in a beaded buckskin hunting shirt.

Yet, except on the outer frontier, buckskin was less common than cotton and wool. Pioneer women found time to card, spin, and weave, making clothes for their men as well as dresses for themselves and their daughters. Some even embroidered shirts. When one farmer went to New Orleans to sell surplus stock, he wore a dark, speckled suit from wool grown in his own pasture. This was the work of his wife, who had dyed the cloth with the juice of pokeberries and *bois d'arc* balls.

Most of the country women had a store-bought dress or two to wear to town or to church, but usually they wore homespun dyed with logwood, sumac berries, boiled copperas, or onion skins. When they worked outdoors, they wore bonnets to protect their eyes and complexions from the sun. Townswomen had more variety in clothes, but high costs kept them from splurging.

On the coastal plain and in the lower river valleys, especially that of the Brazos, the simple log cabin of the pioneer settler was beginning to give way to the more elaborate home of the plantation owner. Although they formed only a minority of the settlers, some cotton planters from the Old South had come with a few slaves and had acquired large acreages of fertile alluvial land. They grew cotton, which they sent to the coast in either riverboats or cumbersome ox wagons; some planted sugar cane as well.

Although the Republic saw only a small start in

sheep-raising, many farmers grew a few beef cattle. In addition, a growing number of stockmen were giving their main attention to cattle ranching, usually on public land. The brush was full of wild cattle whose ancestors had escaped from Spanish missions or ranches. Some of the blood of the wild Spanish cattle, as J. Frank Dobie has pointed out, later went into the Longhorn steer that was to be famed in song and story.

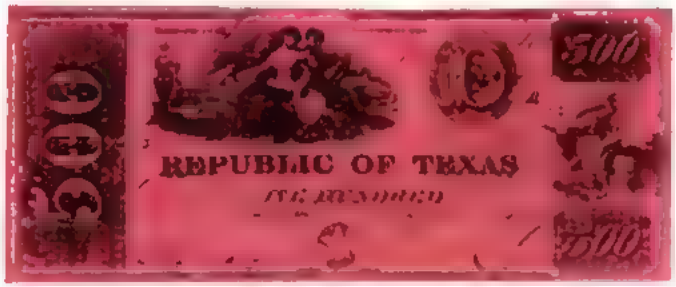
With cattle available free for the capturing and able to thrive on grass alone, large profits were made by some who marketed their herds outside Texas, where prices were higher. Trailing cattle to New Orleans increased during the Republic period, and in 1842 a herd of fifteen hundred was said to have been taken on foot to Missouri.

Taylor White, an illiterate stockman in the lower valley of the Trinity River, had made a fortune in cattle by 1842. When he arrived in Texas nineteen years earlier, his whole fortune was three cows and calves, two small ponies, a wife, and three children. In 1842 he owned 40,000 acres, 30,000 cattle, and a bank account of $60,000 deposited in New Orleans. He had branded 3,700 calves in the spring of 1841 and sold 1,100 steers in New Orleans in the fall of that year. The cost of trailing them to market was only about seventy-five cents each.

Health conditions in the new Republic fell far short of those described in handbooks and prospectuses sent to those who might become settlers. Dysentery and malaria were common, while occasional epidemics of yellow fever and cholera took heavy tolls. Malaria probably explained the pallor of Texas faces that many visitors noted. A young New Yorker wrote of Brazoria County women in the spring of 1842: "I can't say that I admire their looks generally their complexion being of a sallow hue and wanting that mixture of red and white so common at the north."

In the larger towns, some citizens made vigorous but often frustrated efforts at sanitation. In the summer of 1839 a grand jury in Houston denounced the filthy condition of the jail, where "the effluvia for feet about it are so potent as to sicken the stoutest stomach." In October, with many Houstonians dying of yellow fever, a newspaper berated the board of health on the condition of the streets, where carrion "has been suffered to lay unremoved in our vicinity, so near as to impregnate the atmosphere with its putridity." In that year and again in 1844 yellow fever took hundreds of lives in Houston and Galveston. Houstonians made bonfires from tar barrels on the street corners and spread lime where the disease had raged.

Despite the plea of Stephen F. Austin for a comprehensive school system, the Republic made only a small beginning in education. Houston had the only tax-supported public school. Most of the country schools were held for only a few months a year in log cabins with puncheon floors and split-log benches. Usually the textbooks were whatever volumes the children could bring from home. An array of switches in the corner helped to maintain discipline. Some of the towns had



The "Redback" currency issued by President Mirabeau Lamar between 1839 and 1841 was impressively printed, but steadily depreciated in value until 1842, when it fell to a low of eight cents on the dollar. The practice of putting lusty young nudes on official currency, it should be pointed out, was not unique to the administration of Lamar—or even to Texas.

In 1849 William M. G. Samuel, a San Antonio functionary, sought to enliven his dreary courthouse office by painting affectionate scenes of the plaza outside. The painting above, showing the plaza from the east side, was one of four he completed.

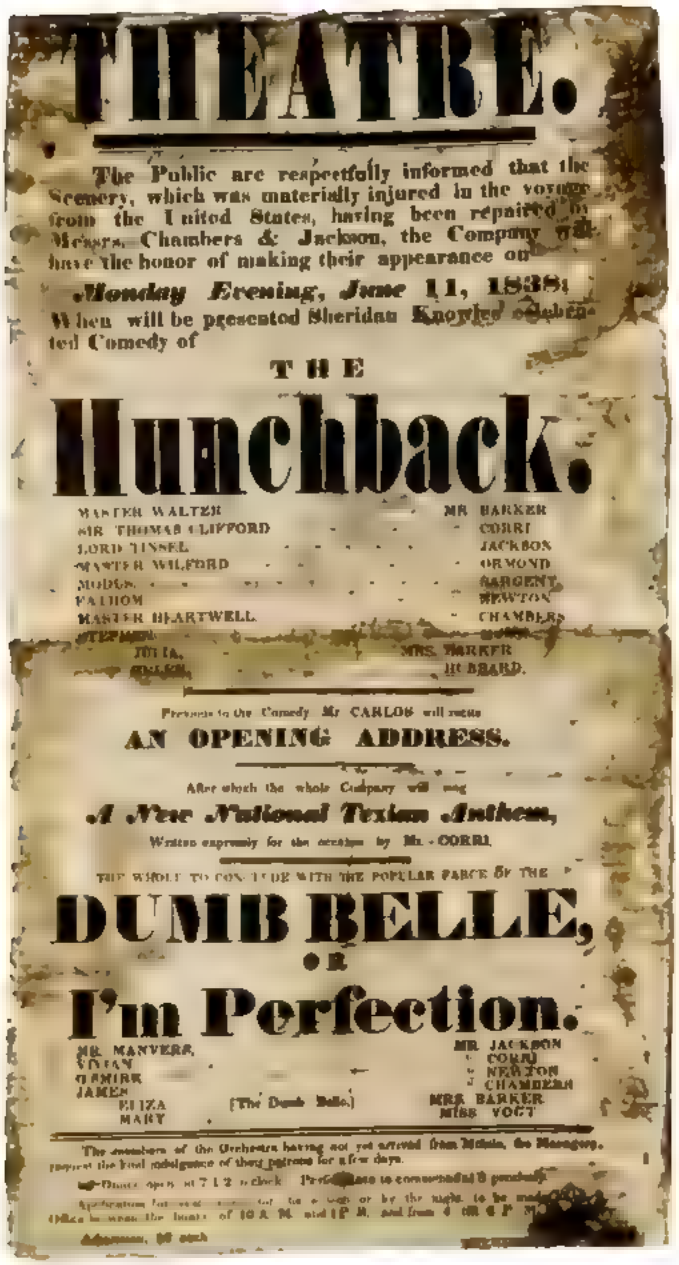
better schools, privately supported; and about a score had academies financed by tuition. Several private and church colleges were just getting started. A few affluent families sent their children away to schools in the United States.

Religion often was a strong influence in the rough life of the frontier. In an earlier period, Spaniards had established Catholic missions in Texas; but Indian troubles, combined with other problems, had led to closing some of them. Protestant ministers were barred from both Spanish and Mexican Texas, although a few slipped in secretly. Religious freedom came with the Republic, and soon circuit preachers began riding horseback from one settlement to another. In the marshy coastal country, the Reverend Jesse Hord was thankful for a horse that carried him across a prairie that "nothing but a duck or a goose ever crossed."

Both preachers and horses suffered from the long rides, with few stops for food and shelter. Benjamin Lakin, a pioneer Methodist, wrote in his diary on a Friday in January, "Preached in a cold and open meeting house, then rode about ten miles in the cold." On Sunday he recorded, "Snow falling fast. Rode and preached." On Monday the roads were worse: "Last night it rained and froze to a sleet. Today I rode an unbroken way. The ice cut my horse's legs until the blood came." On Tuesday the ice was so much harder that Lakin had to walk in front of his horse to break the way.

Such frontier habits as heavy drinking, profane language, and disregard of the Sabbath made the Texas Republic a fertile field for the circuit rider. The Methodists, the first to develop the circuit practice, made much of their opportunity. An Austin man wrote in 1843 that "the panther is scarcely more keen-scented for the backwoodsman's blood than the Methodist preacher is for his soul."

Popular among frontier Protestants was the camp meeting, usually held in the late summer or early fall, after the crops were harvested. The preaching, which



THEATRE.

The Public are respectfully informed that the Scenery, which was materially injured in the voyage from the United States, having been repaired by Messrs. Chambers & Jackson, the Company will have the honor of making their appearance on

Monday Evening, June 11, 1838;

When will be presented Sheridan Knowles' celebrated Comedy of

THE

Hunchback.

MASTER WALTER — MR BARKER
SIR THOMAS CLIFFORD — CORRI
LORD TINSEL — JACKSON
MASTER WILFORD — ORMOND
MODUS — SARGENT
FASHION — NEWTON
MASTER HEARTWELL — CHAMBERS
JULIA — MRS. BARKER
HUBERT

Previous to the Comedy Mr CARLOS will recite

AN OPENING ADDRESS.

After which the whole Company will sing

A New National Texian Anthem,

Written expressly for the occasion by Mr. CORRI.

THE WHOLE TO CONCLUDE WITH THE POPULAR FARCE OF THE

DUMB BELLE,

OR

I'm Perfection.

MR. MANVERS — MR JACKSON
SYLVAN — CORRI
GAMBIER — NEWTON
JAMES — CHAMBERS
ELIZA (The Dumb Belle) — MRS BARKER
MARY — MISS VOGT

The members of the Orchestra having not yet arrived from Mobile, the Managers respect the kind indulgence of their patrons for a few days.

Doors open at 7 1/2 o'clock. Performance to commence at 8 precisely.

Admission, $1 each.

Henri Corri's theater group brought the first public play to Texas in June, 1838—but not without difficulty, as the playbill apologetically points out. The group was a tremendous success in Houston, singing the "New National Texian Anthem" and "not only ran the young people wild, but the old people were not much better."

might last four to sixteen days, was held in a clearing in the woods, where the men built a gigantic brush arbor. The arbor benches were of hewn logs or rough planks. Hundreds, sometimes several thousand, came on horseback and in oxcarts or covered wagons, bringing their food.

By 1843 such meetings were common — and often rousing. Houston Methodists, an observer wrote in 1845, "are in a state of horrible—of frightful excitement, which has lasted already eight or ten days and attracts crowds of spectators. No pen or tongue could give you an adequate description of these riotous scenes."

During the preaching, religious frenzy might be expressed in wild dancing, shouting, rolling on the ground, convulsions of barking, or cataleptic fits. Some would fall as if dead and lie unconscious for hours. Meanwhile, in the woods around the fringe of the camp, there might be whisky-peddling and cavorting by some of the young people, the latter bound to bring, in nine months, a crop of "camp-meeting babies."

The routine of frontier life was interrupted also by social gatherings that ranged from wrestling matches to quilting bees. Dances in the log cabins were popular and might last from sundown until the roosters crowed. Music was made by Negro fiddlers, sometimes helped by one who beat time with an iron pin and clevis from the end of a cart tongue or plow beam. The dancers, one settler noted, "didn't glide around. They 'shuffled' and 'double-shuffled,' 'wired,' and 'cut the pigeon's wing,' making the splinters fly." While resting, some of the young men would lend their shoes to others who had come in moccasins, so they could make more noise as they danced.

For the men, fishing and hunting offered sport as well as food. In the fall, neighbors might join in a bear hunt in the deep woods or an excursion to the buffalo plains to the west. Sometimes, in sections well supplied with acorns, the sky would be darkened by a flock of passenger pigeons a mile wide, several tiers deep, and miles long. Occasionally there would be a mountain lion to be killed or a pack of javelinas to give an exciting chase. The javelina, a small pig whose razor-like teeth cut up many hunting dogs, was described by one frontiersman as "a ball of fire with a butcher-knife run through it."

Out on the grasslands many bands of wild horses tempted the adventurous. Speed and wariness made the mustangs hard to capture, but some settlers wanted to try their luck. A few used the spectacular but seldom

successful method of creasing or nicking — stunning the horse with a bullet through the top of his neck. Others tried snaring by placing the noose of a rope on the ground near a salt lick or suspending it from branches on a mustang trail. More took turns on horseback walking the mustangs down. After several days of being kept away from water and prevented from getting much grass or sleep, the wild horses sometimes became so tired that they could be lassoed or driven into a pen.

Among many of the men, cockfighting was popular. This was especially true in towns along the Mexican border, where matches were held in the plazas. But some Anglo farmers slipped off on Sunday afternoons to a bare spot in the woods to watch rooster duels. A sportive frontiersman might keep a pet gamecock in his barn, feeding him extra corn and training him for combat. The sharp steel gaffs worn by the cocks usually made the match fatal to the loser.

Of all frontier sports, the most popular was horse racing. The typical match had only two contenders, on a grassy track a quarter of a mile long. The small, chunky quarter horse, maneuverable and intelligent, was well adapted to this kind of racing. Even though he may have worked as a cow pony through the week, he was ready to sprint on the prairie turf on Sunday afternoon.

Often the match was between top horses of nearby ranches, with cowboys betting all their cash and next month's wages. When money ran out, as it often did, spare ponies, watches, clothing, or even saddles might be wagered. Cheering for a nag on the straightaway let the frontiersman toss his sombrero and air his lungs. He would ride for miles to see one of the races, camping overnight if necessary.

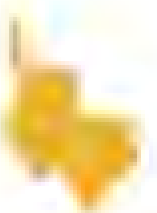
In the sprawling but almost isolated Texas Republic, ability to read meant little, since there seldom was time for reading—and seldom anything to read except the family Bible or, in relatively few homes, a small weekly newspaper. The paper, in spite of its restricted space for news, might occasionally publish a poem or a tall tale of the backwoods. For the few with books in their homes, such new ones as the memoirs of David Crockett and Peter Ellis Bean were popular, as was the two-volume work by George Wilkins Kendall, *Narrative of the Texan Santa Fe Expedition,* issued in 1844.

In 1838 Houston opened its first theater with the Sheridan Knowles comedy, *The Hunchback*; and a second theater was opened the next year. Some of the more important performances were attended by the Texas president and his cabinet. Traveling theatrical companies made occasional appearances in Galveston, Matagora, Clarksville, and San Augustine; and several towns organized amateur theater groups in the latter years of the Republic. In 1843 the Olympic Circus, with equestrian and acrobatic feats, toured Galveston, Houston, and San Augustine.

Music was perhaps the art that made most progress in the Republic decade. A few pianos and other musical instruments were found in each of the larger towns; and even without them there were cowboy ballads, Negro spirituals, church hymns, and in some places lilting Spanish songs. Houston had concerts of church music in 1838, and in the following year a sacred music society was formed there. Texans of German ancestry gave a concert in Galveston in 1837, and others in Houston in 1840 and later. In 1845 German settlers met under a live oak on the bank of the Comal River and formed a singing society; and choral groups sprang up in other communities at about the same time. In time the ears of some Texans could be soothed by sounds more pleasing than the howl of a lobo wolf on the prairie.

The trappings of civilization came slow and hard to a land whose existence had been carved out of wilderness and settled through years of incredible hardship, constant danger, political uncertainty, and a social environment that tended to make up in sheer exuberance what it may have lacked in grace and experience. Yet in the nine years of the Republic's life, there was exhibited a steady evolution from primitive sodbuster's frontier to a more comfortable — if undisputably rugged — existence, with enough economic, political, and social amenities to form a base for the future life of an American state.

Wayne Gard is first vice-president of the Texas State Historical Association and the author of seven books, among them *Frontier Justice, The Chisholm Trail, The Great Buffalo Hunt,* and *Rawhide Texas.* He has contributed to *American Heritage,* the *Southwestern Historical Quarterly,* and many other periodicals.

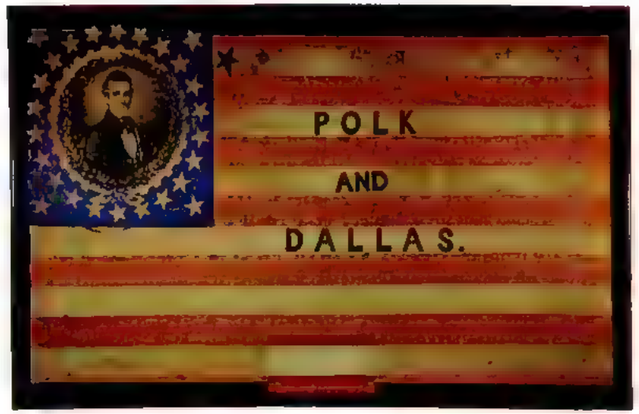


The Mexican War: Climax of Manifest Destiny

BY DAVID LAVENDER

"Welcome, sister: Your Father has won you liberty and independence and you have fairly won the right to be identified with the Land of the Brave, and the Home of the Free."
Shall the slanders that have been urged against your sister, sever those whose blood flows from the same lineage?
Stand back, Madam Texas! for we are more holy than thou! Do you think we could have anything to do with gamblers, horse-racers, and licentious prostitutes?
Softly, softly friend Harry. You has mentioned the very reason that we cannot Vote for thee!
DALLAS
POLK
TEXAS
CLAY
QUAKER.
VIRTUOUS HARRY, OR SET A THIEF TO CATCH A THIEF!

The 1844 presidential contest between James K. Polk, a Democrat, and Henry Clay, a Whig, centered largely around the annexation of Lady Texas. The issue was quite bitter, for northern Whigs saw annexation as a not very subtle plot on the part of southerners to add slave territory to the United States and upset the balance of power established by the Missouri Compromise of 1820—which had been engineered by Clay. Polk and his running mate George M. Dallas took the election handily.



American settlers in Mexican Texas represented a curious restlessness in the American spirit, a migratory impulse that led a varied collection of pioneers into the far corners of the West in the first three decades of the nineteenth century. The glacial inexorability of this westward movement ultimately gave birth to a faith called "Manifest Destiny," a concept that held that the spread of American institutions across the entire sweep of the continent was not only inevitable, but part and parcel of Providential design.

The idea found its most vigorous official voice in the person of President James K. Polk, whose expansionist goals upon taking office in 1845 included the acquisition of Oregon, California, and the Texas Republic. The first move in Polk's continental plan was the annexation of Texas. On June 16, 1845, the Texan legislature accepted the U.S. offer of annexation, and eight months later Texas President Anson Jones delivered a moist eulogy for the Republic: "The Lone Star of Texas, which ten years since arose amid clouds, over fields of carnage, and obscurely shone for a while, has culminated, and, following an inscrutable destiny, has passed on and become fixed forever in that glorious constellation which all freemen and lovers of freedom in the world must reverence and adore — the American Union. . . .

"The final act in this great drama is now performed. The Republic of Texas is no more."

It was not quite the final act. Mexican outrage at what she considered nothing less than territorial piracy soon flared into open hostility. In April, 1846, hostility became war. In the article that follows, David Lavender narrates the background, progress, and ultimate expression of Manifest Destiny.

THE IMPLACABLE FORCES of American expansionism, later to be labeled "Manifest Destiny," are older than the nation itself. As soon as Colonial soldiers and European diplomats had swept the French out of North America, restless farmers and land speculators followed the tracks of pioneer Indian traders and deer hunters across the Appalachian Mountains into the thick forest north of the Ohio River, and south among the giant canebrakes and salt licks of Kentucky.

The activity was illegal at times. The migrants defied the Proclamation Line of 1763, which had been designed in part to slow them down, and squatted stubbornly where treaties with the forest tribes and charters granted to speculative land companies said they had no right to be. Repeated attacks by Indians and halfhearted attempts by soldiers and sheriffs interrupted the flow of squatters no more than a handful of twigs might divert a swollen stream. And yet, paradoxically, the farmers among these defiant settlers had scarcely hewn out a clearing, the merchants and millwrights had scarcely opened their doors, when they were ready to sell out for the slightest profit and move on.

Behind this compulsive restlessness lay a profound hope for betterment. Some of its expressions, to be sure, were crass enough. With a continent ahead awaiting exploitation, it was more "practical" to clear new soil than to fertilize old — a factor of particular appeal to the cotton growers of the South. More important, however, were the unearned increments attaching to real estate. By forging ahead of settlement, farmers and town promoters, no matter how uneducated or lacking in influential connections, could get in at the beginning of the price rise. Moreover, they would be working in a democratic milieu where men began as equals — or so the faith said.

Soon after the Revolution, the expansion had accelerated to such a pace that foreign governments sought to contain it, lest the United States grow too strong. Spain laid claim to the Old Southwest between the Appalachians and the Mississippi, and sought to strengthen the barrier by intriguing among the Indians. At the same time the British — partly out of a desire to protect their fur grounds farther north — maintained a line of forts on American soil in the vicinity of the Great Lakes. Even after these had been surrendered in 1796, British traders continued unofficially to arm the Indians there and along the upper Mississippi.

Starting out to relieve Spanish pressure on the lower Mississippi by purchasing New Orleans, Thomas Jefferson ended by acquiring all Louisiana from Napoleon, who recently had wrested the enormous region from Spain. Lewis and Clark, forerunners of empire, immediately pushed across the territory in search of a commercial transportation route to the Columbia River, as well as a northern river that would let Americans compete with the British for the furs of the Saskatchewan country. Though these routes could not be found, the explorers' report about the swarms of beaver in the Rockies started St. Louis fur men pushing up the Missouri and Astor hurrying toward the Columbia, the Pacific gateway to the mountains.

Farther south, explorer Zebulon Pike was arrested and deported by the Spanish for trespassing on New Mexican soil — but not before he had noted the commercial possibilities in Santa Fe. To what degree his adventures were connected with Aaron Burr's fuzzy scheme to detach the Southwest from Spain has been long debated by historians. The Spanish saw the affair

President Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna —"Napoleon of the West."

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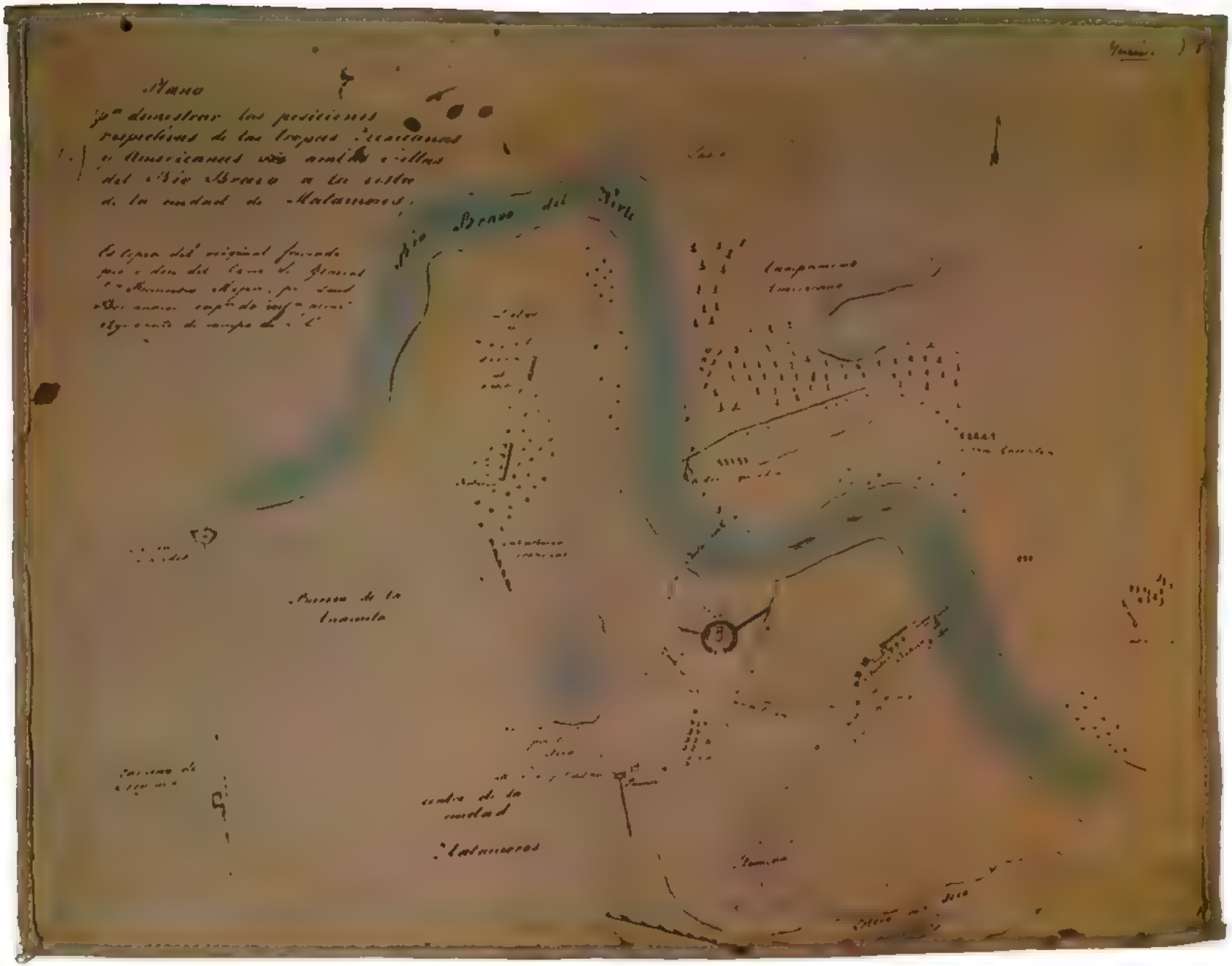
Camp of the U.S. Army of Occupation near Corpus Christi, Texas, in October, 1845. From here, following the annexation of Texas in December, General Zachary Taylor would be ordered to move his troops to the Rio Grande.

as proof of Yankee aggressiveness and braced to meet it. For the next decade and a half nearly every American who ventured toward Santa Fe suffered imprisonment and confiscation of his goods.

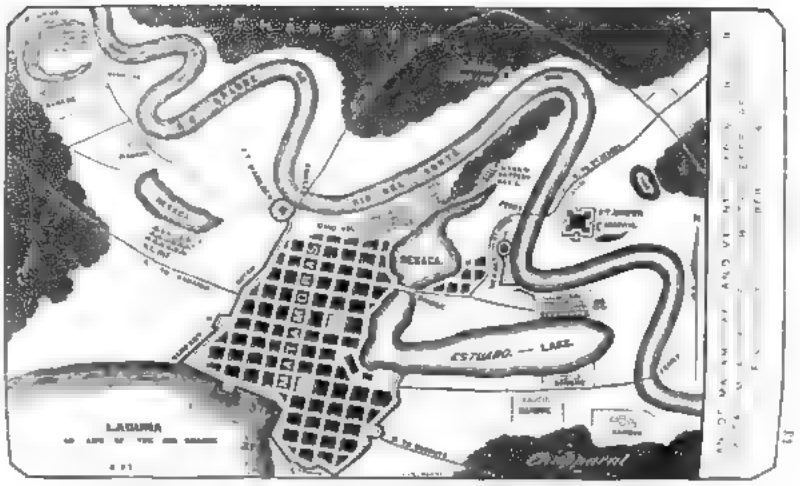
The War of 1812 threatened an even more violent end to expansion in the north. American thrusts toward the upper Great Lakes and along the upper Mississippi were ignominiously defeated. Urged on by the British, Indians routed the trappers on the Missouri. Over on the Columbia Astor's partners, fearful of naval attack, sold their posts to the North-West Company.

After the war diplomats repaired the losses. The border from the Lake country to the Rockies was reestablished where it had been at the outbreak of the conflict. Astoria was returned to American ownership, and Great Britain and the United States were granted equal rights of settlement in what was called "Oregon," an undelineated area extending from the Rockies to the Pacific.

In 1819, under the Adams-Onís treaty with Spain, the United States relinquished her claim to some of the land north of the Rio Grande. In exchange, she gained the Floridas and, in the Far West, a boundary running to the ocean along the forty-second parallel. So far as the Spanish were concerned, the Americans now had a clear sweep to the Pacific. If only they would advance that way and leave the Southwest alone! That this eventuality was unlikely was made clear by the outcry the frontier population raised against the surrender of Texas. But perhaps the insatiable Yankees could be turned into allies, the Spanish governor of Texas reasoned. In exchange for land, they might em-


Río Bravo del Norte
Campamento Americano
Barranca de la Ranchería
Matamoros

By March, 1846, the Army of Occupation had become an American expeditionary force, creating Fort Brown on the northern banks of the Rio Grande, opposite Matamoros. For weeks, General Taylor and Mexican General Mejia exchanged baleful proclamations, but the paper war became real on April 25, when Mexican cavalry killed sixteen American dragoons. On May 13 Congress declared war. "We go to war with Mexico," Secretary of State James Buchanan said, "solely for the purpose of conquering an honorable and just peace. Whilst we intend to prosecute the war with vigor . . . we shall bear the olive branch in one hand, and the sword in the other." At the left is a map compiled for General Mejia shortly before the opening conflict, showing the disposition of Mexican and American troops on opposite sides of the river. At the upper right is an American map of the same area in 1847, after American occupation.



On May 8, 1846—before war was officially declared—Taylor defeated a contingent of Mexicans at Palo Alto, near Matamoros, and on the following day won a more extensive engagement at Resaca de la Palma. He then retired to Fort Brown and slowly prepared for general operations in northern Mexico. In July he moved with six thousand troops toward Monterrey. In the meantime, General John Wool, commander of the Army of the Center, marched into northern Mexico from San Antonio. Among his troops was a seventeen-year-old dragoon by the name of Samuel Chamberlain, who set down an account of his adventures in Mexico in an illustrated narrative called My Confession, *first published by Life Magazine in 1954. In the painting below, Chamberlain depicted the march of Wool's army from San Antonio.*

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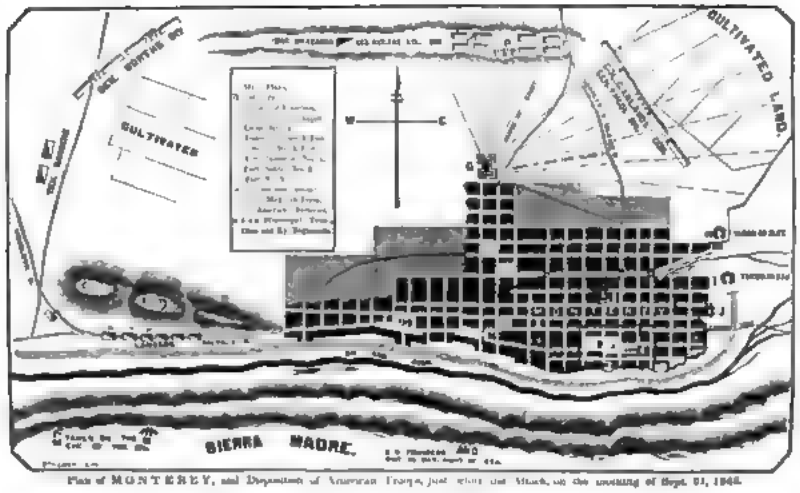
Samuel Chamberlain's view of the Texas Rangers, 1846.

The Battle of Palo Alto, May 8, 1846. (Carl Nebel painting.)



The battle lines for Monterrey (see overleaf).

brace Spanish citizenship and the Roman Catholic religion, and thus become bulwarks against their former countrymen.

Under these stipulations Moses Austin was allowed to settle several American families on a large grant of land beside the Brazos River. Although Moses soon died and Augustín de Iturbide led a successful revolt against Spain, the new colonizing policy seemed promising enough. It was continued by Moses' son Stephen and by the new government of Mexico; good feeling was such that trappers and traders were even welcomed into Santa Fe. But the rapprochement did not last. Regretting the decision to yield Texas, Presidents Adams and Jackson sought by purchase and bribery to retrieve the area. The Mexicans rejected all offers. Meanwhile, American settlers in Texas had fallen into quarrels with their governors over slavery (which the Mexicans had outlawed), inadequate representation in the legislative assembly, and a horde of irritations springing from cultural antipathies. Though Stephen Austin and other American-born leaders helped the authorities quell the first efforts at revolt, the situation grew more explosive each year.

Affairs were no calmer farther west. American trappers and traders exploited the region so exuberantly that the Mexican government closed the streams of the Southwest to foreigners and placed heavy taxes on goods imported by wagon caravan from Missouri. Men like Jedediah Smith and the Patties, who ignored the edicts and pressed on to California, were arrested and ordered to leave. Others kept coming, however, including Boston ship captains seeking cowhides and carrying articles for petty barter. Both groups returned home with tales of fertile, sunbathed fields and of harbors facing toward the exotic trade of the Orient. Aware by then of the limitations of the mouth of the Columbia as a port, the mercantile interests of the Northeast began musing about opportunities south of the forty-second parallel. Their interest in the entire area quickened in 1836, when Texians under Sam Houston defeated Santa Anna at San Jacinto and established the independent Republic of Texas.

Only the British in Oregon seemed able to resist the ubiquitous infiltrators. Although Americans supposedly had full right to trade and settle in the Northwest, the fur men of the Hudson's Bay Company managed their craft and the Indians so skillfully that neither American trappers coming overland nor American shipowners risking the Columbia's bar were able to establish themselves. As usual, settlers finally broke the barrier — retired mountain men, who opened farms in the Willamette Valley, and missionaries, who came to convert the Indians and then stayed to be of service to the civilization they saw rising about them.

Early in the 1840's wagonloads of farmers and town boomers began to appear, and shortly thereafter other migrants worked out routes across the forbidding Sierra Nevada into California. Official United States exploring parties — Wilkes by sea and Frémont by land — arrived to examine the scene, too, for America's concern now stretched from sea to sea.

It had been an extraordinary sweep. Within less than a century, American homesteaders had thrust forward nearly three thousand miles in the face of harsh natural

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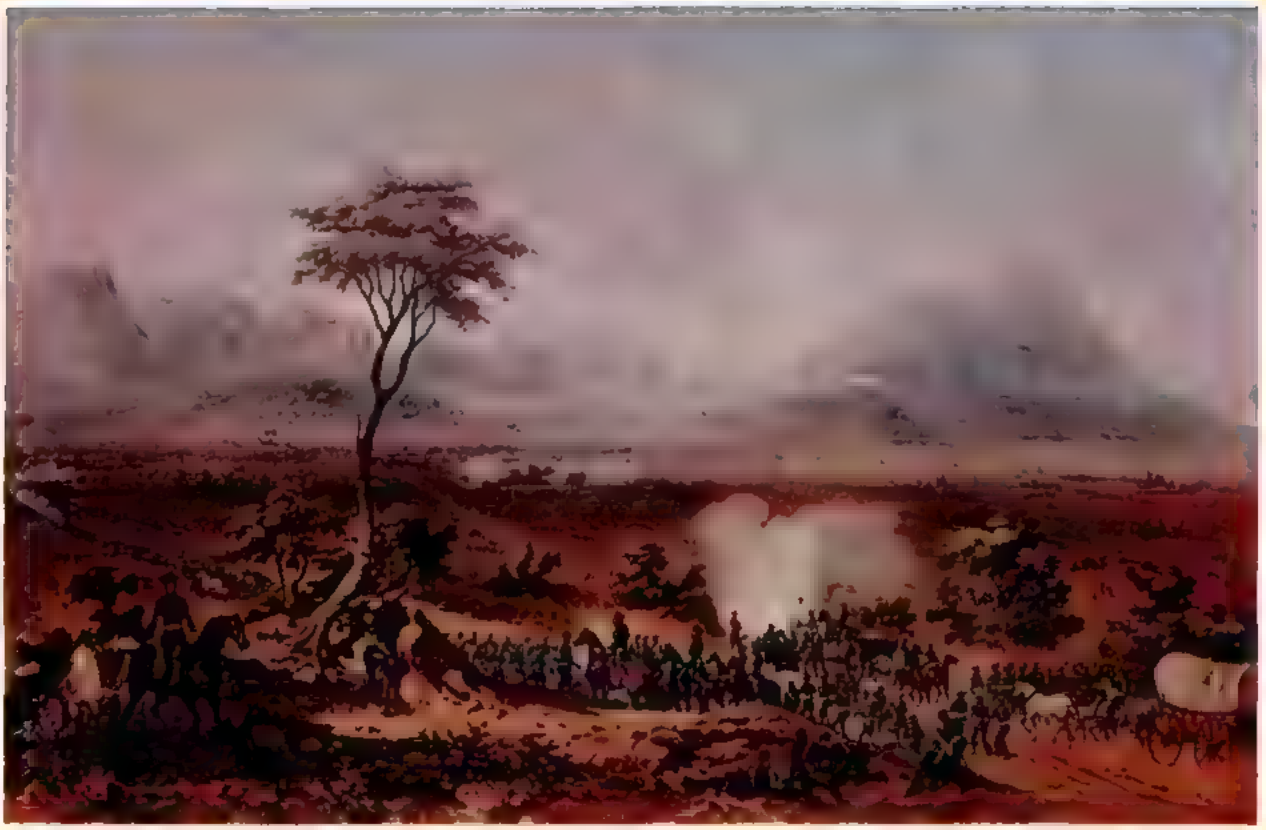

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Between September 18 and 22, 1846, Taylor's forces contended bitterly with the Mexicans over possession of Monterrey, and through deadly street fighting managed to force General Ampudia to capitulate. The Americans had suffered a casualty rate of more than twenty per cent in gaining the center of the city, and Taylor was willing to settle for what amounted to an armistice: Ampudia was permitted to withdraw his army intact, with six of his field pieces and all small arms; the Americans were to occupy the city, but promised to remain for eight weeks east of a line drawn a few miles beyond it. (Carl Nebel painting, 1851.)

Chamberlain, who painted the second-hand version of the battle at the upper left, expressed outrage at the capitulation terms: "What a disgrace to American arms! Everything most advantageous to the Mexicans, and injurious to the United States." In fact, the arrangement was quite reasonable. The Battle of Monterrey was nothing better than a technical victory, although the news of nine hundred American casualties fired languishing patriotic fervor in the United States, where "the President's War" was receiving heavy criticism from such dissenters as Abraham Lincoln.

Chamberlain's interpretation of events tended toward the colorful. The scene opposite ostensibly recorded a particularly brutal atrocity on the part of American troops, who had trapped a number of Mexicans in a cave. "The cave was full of our volunteers yelling like fiends," Chamberlain wrote, "while on the rocky floor lay over twenty Mexicans, dead and dying in pools of blood. Women and children were clinging to the knees of the murderers and shrieking for mercy." Military records do not bear out his story of this "massacre."

The Battle of Churubusco, August 20, 1847: 4,297 Mexican casualties, 938 Americans. (Carl Nebel painting.)

obstacles, aroused Indians, and resistant foreign powers. Exhilarated by so much success, romanticists began ascribing the advance to their country's inherent virtues, as though a beneficent Providence had decreed that it was America's destiny to fill a broad belt across the continent with democratic institutions devoted to furthering American ideals. That premise granted, there no longer remained any room whatsoever for the ancient enemies — the Indians, who already were being forcibly removed to new lands beyond the Mississippi, the Mexican heirs of Spain, or the English, all of whom had so long opposed American progress.

By no means all of the nation approved of this headlong thinking or its inevitable corollaries. Enough did, however, that when James K. Polk wrapped up the feeling in a campaign promise to reannex Texas and reoccupy Oregon, he was elected President by a razor-thin margin. Tyler, the outgoing President, snatched some of the laurels from his successor by prevailing on Congress, just days ahead of the inauguration, to pass a joint resolution approving the annexation of Texas. Indignantly proclaiming that the action amounted to a declaration of war, the Mexican ambassador sailed for home. The London press growled ominously about Polk's Oregon aspirations, and it looked as though the country would have two wars on its hands at once.

Polk grew suddenly cautious, sending his diplomats to Britain for talks while simultaneously trying to pry the Southwest, California included, from Mexico with a lever of cash. When the Mexicans rebuffed his overtures, Polk retorted by rattling the sword. He ordered Zachary Taylor to march a "Corps of Observation" south to Corpus Christi in newly annexed Texas and, a few months later, to the Rio Grande. Still the Mexicans refused to receive a purchasing agent. His hand forced, Polk drafted a war message for congressional action.

Before finishing it, he received dispatches from Taylor stating that on April 25, Mexican and American patrols had clashed on the Texas side of the Rio Grande a few miles above the Mexican city of Matamoros. The Texas side! Mexico had started the war! Polk redrafted his message and on May 11, 1846, sent it to Congress, which responded by authorizing hostilities. Not until afterward did the country learn that its luck still held: Britain had agreed to a settlement of the Oregon dispute.

The volunteers who answered Polk's first call gave an indication of the quarter in which the greatest enthusiasm for the war lay. The great bulk of the men came from the western states and territories. Paradoxically, Texas, the precipitator of the conflict, provided relatively few men other than her vaunted Rangers — and they proved so unruly that Taylor eventually had to release most of them

Strategy was hastily improvised. Stephen Watts Kearny marched one column against Santa Fe. As soon as he had captured the city, he was to send part of his troops to Chihuahua and, if circumstances were propitious, to lead the rest to California to cooperate with the Navy in an occupation of the western ports. General John E. Wool was to march another column from San Antonio across unmapped deserts to join Kearny's Chihuahua contingent. Meanwhile Taylor was to advance with the bulk of the new recruits against Monterrey. The idea behind all this was to snatch Mexico's northern provinces and then sit tight on them until Santa Anna, returned to power with American connivance, felt secure enough to sue for peace.

Taylor began swiftly, routing a Mexican force that tried to cut his supply lines, and afterwards taking Matamoros without trouble. Far greater problems beset his efforts to weld the newly arrived, fever-ridden recruits into an effective force, then to move that force through the dreadful summer heat, up the Rio Grande to Camargo, jumping-off place for Monterrey. Because of transportation shortages he could assemble only 6,645 men for a bitter, three-day (September 20-23), house-to-house assault on the stoutly defended city. Both sides took so many losses that the commanding generals agreed on an armistice.

Taylor's failure to follow through infuriated Polk, who was already out of sorts because he suspected that Taylor had his own eye on the Presidency. Furthermore, Santa Anna was not bargaining as expected. To bring the full weight of the war home to him — and also to sidetrack Taylor — the administration decided to abandon its initial strategy and launch a campaign against Mexico City. Winfield Scott was placed in charge. He was authorized to strip Taylor of his best troops and then relegate Old Rough and Ready to the obscurity of a defensive role in Monterrey.

The outraged general retorted by disobeying. With Wool, who had joined him after failing to reach Chihuahua, he pushed into the mountains south of Saltillo. There, in February 1847, his scouts reported that Santa Anna was advancing 15,000 or more men across the

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After the semi-victory of Monterrey, Zachary Taylor vacillated, trying to determine what it was he wanted to do; one of his desires was for a military victory of unquestioned proportions. With that in mind he organized a major expeditionary move south from Saltillo. In the mountains a little beyond Buena Vista, he was challenged by the army of Santa Anna on February 22 and 23, 1847. By the end of the second day of vicious fighting, the battle was over, as described by Samuel Chamberlain, one of the participants: "Night closed down on the field of blood, for another hour the artillery on both sides continued to flash, then silence came and Buena Vista was lost — and won."

The victory broke the power of the Mexicans in the north, and Santa Anna's troops straggled back to central Mexico to face an American force under General Winfield Scott moving west from Vera Cruz. On April 18 Scott defeated them at Cerro Gordo, then, moving inexorably toward Mexico City, repeated his victory at Contreras, Churubusco, and Molina del Rey. By September 13 Scott's forces had arrived outside the gates of Mexico City, and laid siege to the Castle of Chapultepec. Three days later the city fell, and as Justin H. Smith described it in The War with Mexico *(1919), "General Scott, dressed in full uniform and mounted on a tall, heavy bay charger, dashed with his staff and Harney's dragoons into the grand plaza — his noble figure, gold epaulets and snowy plumes, resplendent under the brilliant sun, fitly typifying the invisible glory of his unkempt and limping army." The Valley of Mexico had been taken with 801 American casualties and more than 2,000 Mexicans killed and wounded. On February 2, 1848, American and Mexican functionaries signed the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, ending one of the bitterest, least popular wars in the history of the United States.*

Above left: ***"The Battle of Buena Vista," by Carl Nebel.***
Left: ***General Zachary Taylor at his headquarters after the Battle of Buena Vista.***
Above: ***General Winfield Scott's triumphant entrance into Mexico City.***

Winfield Scott, the hero of America's conquest of Mexico, found himself facing a considerable residue of dissent when he entered the presidential race of 1848. The political cartoon shown at left was but one extreme example. There were other, more reasoned reflections, among them that of Ulysses S. Grant, who had fought on the plains of Mexico: "I do not think there was ever a more wicked war than that waged by the United States on Mexico." The cost of the war: $100,000,000, eleven thousand American dead, and several thousand more Mexicans. The gain: the continental United States. History has yet to balance judgment.

waterless deserts by forced marches. Taylor had 4,759. Scrambling for better position, he fell back to a gully-seamed plateau girt by steep mountains on one side and impassable ravines on the other. Just north of the elevated flat was a walled *rancho* called Buena Vista.

Thinking that the Americans were in retreat, Santa Anna drove his exhausted men after them without respite. They found a hole between the mountains and the lightly held American flank, and almost broke through. Taylor's highly mobile field artillery and Jefferson Davis's Mississippi Volunteers checked the penetration. Too tired and disheartened to try again, the Mexican army abandoned the field during the night of February 23, 1847.

Far to the south, Scott battered into Mexico City. On February 2, 1848, representatives of the defeated government signed the treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, which ceded the Southwest to the United States. Most Americans, too exultant to recognize through the glow of triumph the premonitory shadows of the Civil War, felt that destiny had at last fulfilled its promise and that their nation was now complete.

David Lavender's books on the West have been scattered along a broad spectrum of topics, from personal reminiscence to narrative history. They include *One Man's West, The Great Divide, Bent's Fort, Westward Vision, Fist in the Wilderness,* and *The American Heritage History of the Great West.* His most recent book is *The Rockies,* a contribution to Harper & Row's *Regions of America* series.

THE AMERICAN WEST REVIEW

LITERATURE OF THE REPUBLIC

By Stephen B. Oates

The history of colonial and independent Texas lasted only twenty-four years, from 1821 to 1845. Yet in that time Texans experienced so many compellingly dramatic changes that their short-lived Republic has been enshrined in some of America's best (and, I fear, some of her worst) historical literature. In this essay, I should like to describe a few of the best volumes that comprise that literature. By necessity, the list is selective, but almost anyone can, if he cares to, find at least one item here that will enlighten his study of the Republic.

Any general history of Texas or the Southwest, of course, has chapters on the era of the Republic. But none, it seems to me, captures the spirit of that period better than volume two of Paul Horgan's *Great River: The Rio Grande in North American History* (2 vols., 1954). *Glory, God and Gold* (1954), a narrative history of the Southwest by Paul I. Wellman, also has a dramatic account of the rise and fall of the Republic. W. Eugene Hollon provides trenchant commentary on historic and present-day Texas in *The Southwest, Old and New* (1961).

There are several comprehensive histories of colonial and independent Texas, but the classic is Henderson Yoakum's *History of Texas* (reprint ed., 1935). The most readable introduction to the colonial period is David M. Vigness's *Revolutionary Decades, 1810–1836* (1965). For a detailed examination of the cultural conflicts between Texas and Mexico, Samuel H. Lowrie's *Culture and Conflict in Texas* (1932) and Eugene C. Barker's *Mexico and Texas* (1927) are both excellent studies. Barker's *Life of Stephen F. Austin* (1927), though tedious in spots, remains the standard biography of that polygonal Texas figure.

Because of its intrinsic drama, the revolution has generated more books, poems, and songs than just about any other aspect of Texas history. A sound, sober introduction to that conflict is William C. Binkley's *Texas Revolution* (1952), a collection of interpretative essays. Walter Lord has written the most reliable account of the Alamo, a dry-eyed effort at realistic historical narrative entitled *A Time to Stand* (1961). What makes this a great work is that the Alamo defenders, though stripped of fabricated romance, still come across as legitimate heroes. A solid narrative of the "runaway scrape" and the last battle of the revolution is Frank A. Tolbert's *Day of San Jacinto* (1959). Most of the important documents are in *The Mexican Side of the Texas Revolution* (1928), assembled by Carlos E. Castaneda, and "The San Jacinto Campaign," by Eugene C. Barker, in the *Quarterly of the Texas State Historical Association* (1901).

The Texas Navy has been too little appreciated, as John H. Jenkins states in his contribution to this collection. Two books that will help illuminate the role of Texas's hardy sailors are Jim Dan Hill's *Texas Navy* (1937), now available in paperback, and Tom Henderson Wells's *Commodore Moore and the Texas Navy* (1961).

There are a number of splendid biographies of the major characters in the saga of the revolution and the Republic. Llerena Friend's *Sam Houston, the Great Designer* (1954) is a scholarly "life and times" study. A more popular biography is Marquis James's *The Raven* (new ed., 1953). A serious and ambitious biography is James A. Shackford's *David Crockett: The Man and the Legend* (1956). Other notable biographies are Herbert Gambrell's *Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar* (1934) and his *Anson Jones* (2nd ed., 1964).

The Republic has spawned some of the most exhaustive studies in Texas and American historiography. For example, Joseph Milton Nance has written virtually a day-by-day account of the Texas-Mexican frontier in *After San Jacinto, 1836–1841* (1963) and *Attack and Counterattack: 1842* (1964). The standard studies of non-military aspects of the Republic are William Ransom Hogan's *Texas Republic: A Social and Economic History* (1946) and Stanley Siegel's *Political History of the Texas Republic* (1956). For day-to-day life in the Republic, see Wayne Gard's *Rawhide Texas* (1965).

Once you know the facts of a period in history, as Bertrand Russell once observed, "it becomes agreeable and profitable to read the letters and memoirs of the time." Any number of published letters and memoirs provide insight into Texas's leading characters — among them, *The Writings of Sam Houston* (8 vols., 1938–1943); *The Papers of Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar* (6 vols., 1921–1927); *Rip Ford's Texas* (1963); *William Bollaert's Texas* (1956); and *Recollections of Early Texas* (1958), edited by John H. Jenkins.

On the international scene, two very able studies are E. D. Adams' *British*

(Continued on page 76)

LOOKING WESTWARD

By Joseph E. Illick

In a recent rollicking novel on Texas politics, *The Gay Place*, author William Brammer (a former LBJ staff member who was ostracized for his literary performance) introduces Willie England:

> [His] innocent face, blue eyes and straw-colored hair had brought about the speculation among friends that he secretly posed for soft drink advertisements depicting unimaginably wholesome teenagers grinning at one another next to drugstore soda fountains. He struggled, with singular unsuccess, against this portrayal. He was thirty years old and rather liked to think of himself as a thoroughgoing degenerate, and if he failed, it was probably the result of his conveying precisely the reverse image years before at college. . . .

Brammer's caricature is of Willie Morris, the current editor of *Harper's*, who grew up in Mississippi, edited the campus newspaper at the University of Texas and won a Rhodes scholarship, and succeeded Ronnie Dugger at the helm of the *Texas Observer*. Now the youngest editor (33) of the nation's oldest magazine, Morris has written about his life in *North Toward Home* (Houghton Mifflin, $5.95). He described his purpose to Diana Hobby of the Houston *Post*.

> If it were taken as a literal biography it would be a joke. I wanted to try to describe the experiences, not as they affected me, but as American experiences, themselves. I tried to reflect the violent underside of America in our time, this generation that came to maturity in the 40's and early 50's. This kind of autobiography has a very strong tradition in America. Mark Twain's *Roughing It* is this.

Although the "violent underside" is not much evidenced in *North Toward Home*, Morris has otherwise been most successful portraying American experience through his own life.

Born in the same year as Willie Morris and brought up in a small town, I see universal truths in his humorous re-creation of a youth in Yazoo City, Mississippi. Having also lived in New York, I can vouch for the veracity of his graphic account of the fight for survival. Although never a resident of Texas, I must at least say that the psychological distance between the Ivy League schools and the university at Austin seems, by Morris's account and my experience, not to have been very great in the 1950's. (I do recall, however, the dismay of one of my Texas classmates on finding that Princeton was not coeducational.) And the statement that politics in Texas were "a reflection of the broader system" is hardly arguable, especially these days

Indeed, in Morris's view Texas is a more explicit expression of the American experience than either Mississippi or New York. He claims that the only consistent generalization to be made about the Lone Star State is that "it was American. American in an almost driven way, sometimes a parody or a burlesque of America, but sharing in its extravagant standards and hungry values."

A few years ago, John Bainbridge wrote in *The Super-Americans:* "Texas is a mirror in which Americans see themselves reflected, not life-sized but, as in a distorting mirror, bigger than life." Bainbridge's narrative is always light but sometimes strained. By contrast, Morris is relaxed; his prose has a drawl to it. He has lived in Texas and come to love it. The personal dimension of *North Toward Home* complements the matter-of-factness of *The Super-Americans*, but of the two Morris's story will be the more enduring.

It will last because it is at once personal and universal. The tension in Willie Morris's life between ideas and experience has been felt by all of us. It was not until he reached the University of Texas that he was even aware of the former.

He had gone to Austin at his father's behest. "I had no desire to leave. . . . I knew Mississippi and I loved what I

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Bartlett's West

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by Robert V. Hine

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Yale University Press
New Haven and London

THE MANUFACTURED WAR

By Ramon Eduardo Ruiz

Origins of the War with Mexico: The Polk-Stockton Intrigue by Glenn W. Price *(University of Texas Press, $5.00).*

Of the wars fought by the United States, none proved more profitable than the Mexican War; only the Spanish-American War cost less. In return for a short military campaign, which involved just two large-scale battles, the United States acquired California, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, and a slice of Colorado. Moreover, no more intrepid or colorful pageant graces the annals of American patriotism than the storming of Chapultepec Castle by General Winfield Scott's defiant infantrymen.

However, this amazingly lucrative venture has attracted the attention of a mere handful of historians. Fewer than a dozen books have appeared on the subject in the last two decades, none by a scholar of national repute. The definitive work remains Justin H. Smith's two-volume study, *The War with Mexico*, published in 1919. While totally unacceptable to Mexican scholars, Smith's chauvinistic, one-sided account, which ironically received the Pulitzer Prize in American history in 1920, survives as the basis for nearly every textbook version of the conflict.

What explains this neglect of an epic conquest in American history? In 1960, Otis A. Singletary, Professor of History at the University of Texas, in a brief monograph on the military story of the war, attempted to fathom this paradoxical silence. He concluded that a number of factors had obscured the event: The war occurred just twelve years before the Civil War, the salient military confrontation in American history. The struggle with Mexico possessed limited national appeal; sectional ambitions encouraged it. While southerners and westerners yearned for war, the northeast had little stomach for it. Abraham Lincoln, one of the great American figures, stood with the opposition; as a congressman he condemned both the war and President Polk for his role in it. Partly as the result of his refusal to support the war, Lincoln lost his bid for reelection.

But Singletary stressed that these are not the principal reasons for the absence of scholarly enthusiasm. In his opinion, a moral question underlies the neglect. Scholars have shunned the war because it represents an offensive war stripped of all moral pretensions. It was not a lofty crusade to correct a wrong, but a campaign to acquire additional territories for the United States at the expense of a weak neighbor. Singletary points out that the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which closed the struggle, even included the payment of fifteen million dollars to Mexico to soothe the troubled conscience of the American people.

Glen W. Price's *Origins of the War with Mexico* steps out of this mold. Though untroubled by the absence of scholarship on the war, Price implicitly accepts Singletary's premise. A revisionist historian, he is critical of the orthodox view held by the majority of American historians, which virtually absolves Polk of the chief responsibility for the conflict. His hard-hitting account leaves no doubt that he believes Polk maneuvered Mexico into a war with the United States. In his version, the Mexicans emerge as victims.

As the subtitle indicates, the focus of the book centers on the Polk-Stockton intrigue, which the author employs to demonstrate that Polk plotted war against Mexico. In his richly documented analysis of the incident, Price argues that Commodore Robert F. Stockton's attempt to encourage the republican leaders of Texas to attack Mexico on the eve of annexation to the United States had not merely the backing of Polk, but his active encouragement and direction. Such a move would have provided the American government with a pretext to rush to the defense of Texas and its nebulous claims to the Rio Grande boundary. In this interpretation Price walks a new path, for although a few maverick historians have suspected that a direct link existed between Polk and Stockton, none dared develop his case with such force and care.

Still, the value of Price's study — and value it has indeed — lies not so much in its discussion of the Stockton episode, but in the author's use of the event to survey the course of American scholarship on the war and to evaluate its implications for commonly held assumptions about the character of American historical development. Price judges the historians severely, Smith in particular, for their lack of historical objectivity and for failing to meet the obligations of the intellectual who stands committed to the eternal pursuit of truth regardless of consequences. Loyalty to misconceived national goals or to a chauvinistic patriotism cannot justify or condone the misdeeds of the past.

Whatever the eventual results of the war — including the transformation of California and the Southwest from backward, abandoned Mexican frontier provinces to modern, progressive extensions of a powerful United States — the end cannot exonerate the means. In his desire to acquire the Far West, Polk, Price believes, helped to weaken the moral fiber of the American people. In their attempts to explain away Polk's responsibility, historians have not dealt rationally with the war; and through their nationalistic interpretations they have helped to perpetuate the myth of a peace-loving American people who reject the use of war as an extension of diplomacy.

The reality, says Price, contains a "record of American pugnacity" equalled only by "a rhetoric of peace which is unmatched by any other nation." That reality, he writes, "demonstrates, if demonstration were needed, the continuing necessity for a candid historical analysis of our wars — and of our explanation of our wars." Unfortunately, continues the author, American historians have failed to explore impartially the roots of the struggle. In their failure to ferret out the truth, historians have failed the American people. That "most American students of our War with Mexico remain largely uninstructed" a century after its conclusion is, to quote Price, "a judgment upon American historians."

Whether or not Price's account fulfills

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ART AND ARTISTS IN TEXAS

By Paul C. Mills

Painting in Texas: The Nineteenth Century by Pauline A. Pinckney *(published for the Amon Carter Museum of Western Art by the University of Texas Press, $15.00).*

Any book attempting to deal comprehensively with western American art history faces four inescapable tasks. First is the elemental research involved in bringing to light the works and careers of the many artists who were neglected during the decades in which taste found them to be insignificant. A second problem lies in clarifying what, if any, relation these artists had to art movements and to patterns of style and development in Europe and America.

A third difficulty, unique to the field of western art history, is the need to relate such iconographers as pioneering emigrants and government-sponsored artists to an enormously complicated historical background, revealing them not only as artists but as participants and recorders of the ever-changing Westward Movement. The final task — certainly not peculiar to art history, but nonetheless difficult — is to make such a book readable enough to capture the interest and attention of an audience not already motivated by a desire for specific information.

Together, these four needs comprise an almost insurmountable task of research, collation, perception, and writing skill. It is not surprising that most of the books in the still-embryonic field of western art history are characteristically very good in overcoming one or two of the difficulties but seldom triumph in all — particularly the fourth.

Pauline Pinckney's *Painting in Texas: The Nineteenth Century* while showing signs of the struggle facing any western American art history, generally succeeds as well as any comparable book that comes to mind. Miss Pinckney provides a tremendous amount of information not previously available, the result of long and dedicated research. Her use of family interviews and newspaper sources indicates that she understands clearly where the answers to many questions about nineteenth-century American artists are to be found. Like other researchers in western art history — for whom Robert Taft *(Artists and Illustrators of the Old West)* set the pace as a penetrating excavator of facts — her compilation of new information is one of her most valuable accomplishments. She displays an extensive knowledge of general Texas history, from its provincial period to statehood, and is far more comfortable and knowing than most writers on this subject when she relates her artists to their background in European and American traditions. No less important to the readers, she also writes well, with a lively sense of human anecdote and colorful quotation.

These accomplishments place Miss Pinckney's book on the small shelf of major western American art histories. Nevertheless, it is not the ultimate (and as yet nonexistent) book of its kind. It is basically a collection of superbly-researched, well-written biographies, loosely gathered into groups related by time and circumstances. She makes no major effort to seek larger insights, to create organizing focuses and theses of the sort Edgar Price Richardson has achieved in *Painting in America: The Story of 450 Years,* even though, like all of us, she acknowledges his example with gratitude. Her individual biographies, on the other hand, successfully re-create something of the personality of such artists as Theodore Gentilz, Henry McArdle, W. G. M. Samuels, and R. J. Onderdonk. Written with a skill that involves the reader's sympathies, these pieces rise far above the skeletal, official biographies common to the genre.

At the next level, that of connecting and cutting across biographies to larger questions and syntheses, she is less successful, certainly when compared to the work of Richardson and Thomas Flexner (an experienced author of many books on American art, including *That Wilder Image).* It should be said, however, that both Richardson and Flexner, since they dealt largely with eastern artists and thus had much of their first-step research done for them by previous scholars, were in a better position than Miss Pinckney to take an analytical point of view.

Miss Pinckney, perhaps following Richardson, emphasizes painters, often to the exclusion of illustrators. This is an aristocratic, hierarchical, "fine arts" point of view, but (in California at least) it can obscure certain important truths, among them the fact that some of the better early artists developed many of their subjects and treatments first in illustrated periodicals; their paintings often came later and merely recorded more sumptuously the pictorial ideas that had evolved in other media for other audiences. The point of view now emerging among researchers — at least among those conditioned by their contacts with Far Western material — regards a knowledge of illustration and photography as essential to understanding the art life of the mid-nineteenth century in the West. In this particular regard, Taft, his point of view more shaped by the facts of western art, is perhaps a better example than Richardson.

These questions aside, it is a pleasure to welcome Miss Pinckney's book and to compliment the Amon Carter Museum on another handsome addition to the library of comprehensive western art books. It will long remain among the classics of its kind and hopefully will inspire similar books on other western regions.

Paul C. Mills is Curator of Art for the Oakland Art Museum, Oakland, California.

Lungkwitz engravings of San Antonio de Béxar, 1851.

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A WESTERN GATHERING

Full bibliographic information (number of pages, where published, etc.) for all books reviewed can be obtained from the listing under Current Western Books, page 78.

Sam Houston with the Cherokees, 1829–1833 by Jack Gregory and Rennard Strickland *(University of Texas Press, $6.00)*.

BY ROBERT V. HAYNES

JACK GREGORY AND Rennard Strickland, members of the Speech Department of the University of Arkansas and amateur archaeologists, have attempted the first thorough study of Sam Houston's four years with his Cherokee brothers in the Arkansas Territory, 1829–1833. The result, however, falls short of that goal. The authors admit including "much that is 'legend' or 'speculation'." Consequently, the book is really a series of vignettes describing the numerous legends, tales, rumors, and conjectures about Houston's mysterious sojourn with the Cherokees after his inexplicable resignation as governor of Tennessee, April 16, 1829. Rather than evaluating the merit of these diverse accounts and suggesting some conclusions, the authors explain that their "purpose in offering these legends is not to answer the questions raised but to narrate the story . . . hoping the reader will draw his own conclusions." Unfortunately, few readers possess the necessary information to make such an evaluation.

The book will be rewarding, however, to anyone interested in an entertaining but noncritical recitation of the varied stories about Sam Houston. The authors discuss the "Raven's" insatiable interest in Indian maidens and the question of his reported marriages, his unsavory reputation as the "Big Drunk," his fervent defense of Indian rights, and his unceasing efforts to maintain peace among the tribes as well as between the white and red men. They also recall his brief and unprofitable career as merchant, his continued success as a frontier lawyer, and the numerous, but seldom justified, charges against him. In the Arkansas Territory, as in Tennessee before and Texas afterward, Houston remained colorful and controversial.

The most important question about this brief interlude in Houston's career is why he fled to the Cherokee Nation West in 1829. Unfortunately, the authors are content merely to repeat the numerous conjectures offered at the time. Like Houston's unexpected divorce from his first wife, this mystery will probably never be solved to the satisfaction of all students of Houston. However, the value of this work might have been greatly enhanced had the authors attempted an answer.

In addition, Gregory and Strickland make several questionable assertions. Few historians would accept their statement that in 1829 Houston was "Jackson's anointed successor-heir apparent to the Presidency of the United States."

Organizationally, the book is weak. By discussing several minor topics rather than concentrating upon a few major ones, the authors are guilty of endless repetition. Furthermore, they provide no indication of the development of Houston's character and personality during these years, nor do they attempt to assess the effect this experience may have had in shaping his ideas and plans. Consequently, the study adds little to our knowledge of this rather insignificant episode and fails to substantiate the conclusion that this was "one of the most important periods in Houston's public career." Instead it demonstrates that a forceful, colorful, and hyperactive person could not easily disappear from the public eye even when he tried to go into seclusion.

Robert V. Haynes is in the Department of History at the University of Houston.

The Sunny Slopes of Long Ago edited by Wilson Hudson and Allen Maxwell *(Southern Methodist University Press, $5.95)*.

Three Men in Texas: Bedichek, Webb, and Dobie edited by Ronnie Dugger *(University of Texas Press, $5.95)*.

BY THOMAS SUTHERLAND

The Sunny Slopes of Long Ago and *Three Men in Texas* are part of a growing revelation of things, myths, and men of the Southwest. Such writing contrasts with the work of those who choose defamation of the provinces as their gilt-edged stock. Whatever or wherever the Southwest is, it seems to be more a river

HISTORY OF THE SANTEE SIOUX. By Roy W. Meyer. Amounting to a case study of the Indian problem in the U.S., this is the first detailed history of the fragments into which the exiled tribe was divided following removal from Minnesota in 1862-63. It examines the effects of government policy on the Santees from the days of the earliest treaties to the present. **$7.50**

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JOHN C. DUVAL, First Texas Man of Letters: His Life and Some of His Unpublished Writings. By J. FRANK DOBIE. With sketches by TOM LEA. "Fresh as the leaves of the mesquite when they first put out in the spring" was how the late "Dean of Texas Letters" described the writings of his predecessor, who brought the flavor of early Texas to countless readers with his *Adventures of Bigfoot Wallace* and *Early Times in Texas*. To his perceptive biography of Duval and bibliography of his works Dobie joins a selection of Duval's humorous stories and verse to make a rollicking round-up of Texian wit. *$5.00*

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SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY PRESS
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than a pasture when all the writing is poured together. And the headwaters seem to be near Dobie's tireless typewriter (in his last years, dictating machine), deep in the heart of Texas.

The Sunny Slopes of Long Ago is the latest of thirty-three Texas Folklore Society publications, which, like the *Southwest Review*, have been pioneers of regional literary expression. In this collection Hudson and Maxwell glean largely from cowboy reality and nonreality, including subjects as varied as pokeweed, tobacco, fox-hunting, charcoal-burning, baby-switching, fanatical female frigidity, and the collective unconscious. It is all good reading, although occasional tongue-in-cheek reporting and exaggeration are a little strong for my taste.

Whereas Dugger hails only three literary men in Texas, Dobie has acknowledged a fourth: In the first essay in the Hudson-Maxwell book, he pays tribute to ballad-collector John Lomax, whose phrase was borrowed for the book's title. Lomax worked stoutly to show that "American cowboys are the most interesting breed that this nation has produced." The seed of his work was planted by a remark of Harvard teacher Barrett Wendell, who told him, "You fellows . . . have something back home which should be written about."

Lomax's "Cowboy Lingo," published as the second essay, is as vividly convincing as Mark Twain's evocation of miner lingo in his hilarious rendition of Scottie Briggs' funeral arrangements. When John Lomax describes the ways of doing and calling things on the SMS ranch at Spur, he leaves no doubt that he was there. Paul Patterson on the cowboy's code is just as full of authentic life. Andy Adams and Eugene Manlove Rhodes, here reprinted, are now classic writers on the cowboy.

Along with such folkloric staples is a final essay of more profound analysis. Wilson Hudson writes on Carl Jung's "collective unconscious" theory. Jung believed from his study of the human mind and the many myths that it has invented, that mythic memory is necessary for "individuation." "Modern man needs myths," as Hudson explains Jung, "for psychic wholeness and balance. The problem of ancient man was to enlarge consciousness. The problem of modern man is not to lose contact with the collective unconscious." Although the Latinate abstractions go on being piled higher and deeper, they offer an essential idea: if we couldn't tell old stories and sing old songs, we would end up neurotic from loneliness and emptiness. Indeed, Jung says we have.

BUT WHO KNOWS? Perhaps our predicament does not originate from our lack of tradition or love, but from a crowded and complex world that allows little time and opportunity to be ourselves. *Three Men in Texas* is worth examining if only because it presents a picture of men who, while they wrote of the fact and figment of their area, spent their lives in triumphant resistance to all that tends to destroy the soul.

Somehow Bedichek the naturalist, Webb the historian, and Dobie the folk essayist not only escaped the current false gods but also were able to interpret and record a homegrown variety of western civilization at its best. Their command of language may be matched by wordsmiths in any city — but not the fullness of their definition as men, not the fortitude to stand unmoved before the animal fury that snorts and circles in the bull pits of the world. This triumph deserves a matador's applause. And that is what their acquaintances give them in the comments and reminiscences written for the *Texas Observer* after their deaths and now republished in *Three Men in Texas*.

Thomas Sutherland is a member of the English Department at the University of Texas in Arlington.

Now You Hear My Horn: The Journals of James Wilson Nichols, 1820–1887 edited by Catherine W. McDowell *(University of Texas Press, $7.50).*

BY WILLIAM M. HUDSON

JAMES WILSON NICHOLS began to keep a notebook when he was twelve years old, at the suggestion of a teacher who in three months gave him the only formal education he ever had. Fifty-five years later he sat down to write these journals.

Nichols' manuscript was carefully preserved in his family without coming to light until 1962. It gives a fine eye-wit-

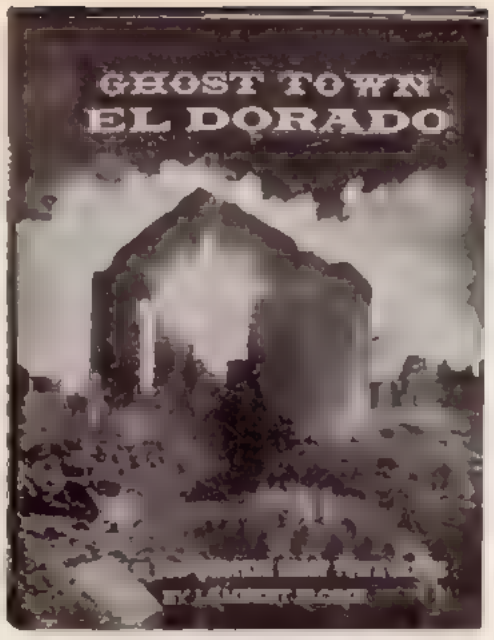
ness account of events and conditions in Texas from 1836 to 1866. (The last events narrated belong to 1866, though the dating on the title page leads us to suppose that the journal continues for some twenty years longer.)

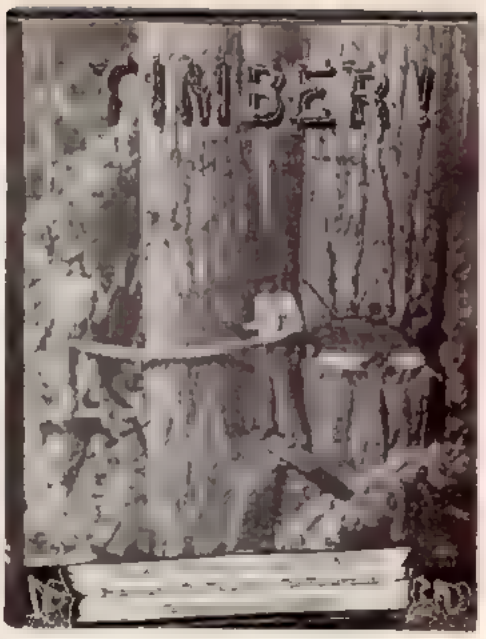
Nichols had plenty of experiences to relate. After his boyhood in Tennessee and Arkansas, during which he had some narrow scrapes, he crossed the Sabine with his family on December 16, 1836, just after Texas had freed itself from Mexico. The Nicholses lived for a while near San Augustine and then moved on to Gonzales. Young Jim soon showed that he was good at scouting and fighting Indians. At various times he was with Ranger companies commanded by Hays, Caldwell, and Callahan. He was in the battle of Plumb Creek, the battle of Salado, and the pursuit of General Woll to the Rio Grande. He was in the Mexican war and went all the way to Monterrey. His narrative of these engagements is detailed and vivid.

During the Civil War Nichols lived in Blanco County. Because he was not in favor of secession, he was harassed by trumped-up charges in court. He tells also about the harsh treatment of the German settlers who remained loyal to the Union. But Nichols' book is not limited to stories of conflict. It gives us many sidelights on how Texans of his day lived, thought, and talked. It includes some anecdotes and perhaps one or two tall tales, though Nichols is not strongly inclined to humor.

Historical narratives are always welcome, especially when they are both lively and circumstantial, as this one is. It was wisely decided to print Nichols' manuscript without editing his sentence structure and spelling; punctuation was altered only for the sake of clarity. The result is that the book has the flavor of a pioneer's speech, almost the sound of his voice. The design and typography by Carl Hertzog are excellent. Photographs, facsimiles, sketches, and maps are included. Historians will surely want to place this book on their shelves along with Noah Smithwick's *Evolution of a State* and John C. Duval's *Early Times in Texas*.

Wilson M. Hudson, of the University of Texas, is editor of Paisano Books, publications of the Texas Folklore Society.





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LOOKING WESTWARD

(Continued from page 66)

saw. . . . Yet more than being desperately in love, I was sorrowfully ignorant — ignorant of myself, ignorant of the world of moving objects I was about to enter." At the university he noted "the acceptance of ideas themselves as something worth living by, rather than the vague self-centered half-thoughts and the mere soaking up of experience." The process of recognition was gradual. It began with his contempt for the fatuous fraternity rites he underwent. Then, during his early association with the *Daily Texan*, he "began to read about strange ideas like integration, and issues of academic freedom, and observations that Dwight D. Eisenhower might be something of a bore." Later he visited a graduate student and his wife and saw "great quantities of books in a private habitat for the first time." It took him years he says, "to understand that words are often as important as experience, because words make experience last." But the lesson was learned. Reflecting on his tenure as editor of the *Daily Texan*, he notes:

> . . . uphold these ideas long enough, frequently enough, and with such inspiration, and some young people are not only going to believe in them, they are going to believe in them with the fervor of the young, and even arrange their lives and sense of honor around them.

President Logan Wilson looked less charitably upon the fervor of the young, and the board of regents was outraged by Willie's editorials on state and national politics.

Morris was a natural choice for editor of the liberal *Texas Observer*, and he accepted the position after four years of "lethargic, dreamy isolation" at Oxford. But academia had taken its toll. Willie was satiated with ideas and anxious for experience; Texas politics provided a fitting arena. Ideas, ideals, and principles counted for little or nothing among the state legislators according to Morris; most were ill-informed, reactionary or in the employ of special interests. "They enjoyed putting on a good show for us," says Willie, and the *Observer* responded to the entertainment with awards for "Oil and Gas Rookie of the Year," "Most Likely to Secede," and the like. "Humor," he recalls, "was essentially a way of surviving." He might have included "adaptability." For although Morris empathized and associated with a small band of liberals, he came to know and even admire (grudgingly) a number of less principled, but equally human, conservative politicians and lobbyists — perhaps an outcropping of his Mississippi youth. He put increasing value on experience as he recognized the limited power of ideas. What lesson could be more American?

MORRIS DID NOT confine his reporting to the legislature, but traveled as well. Here again his attitude is ambivalent. He succumbed "to the euphoria of the Texas road, to that curious, liberating exhilaration that comes with taking a car along a flat and empty highway." At the same time, he found the loneliness oppressive.

> The most convincing testimony to isolation is inarticulate, felt: the simple vista of Main Street in a small Texas town, wrinkled men in khakis under an awning shade, waitresses with their terrible fixed boredom, signposts pointing to towns hours away — of being lost in a vastness too big, and for the natives of being forgotten or mocked or ignored by people on wheels who stop only to scratch, or to drink coffee, or to empty their bowels.

He was most comfortable in some of the cities. El Paso "was like an oasis for me," a judgment welcomed by Paula Leibson in the *El Paso Times*. Kemper Diehl, in the *San Antonio Express*, notes Morris's "uncanny ability to perceive the basic qualities and values of people and places," which might be viewed as a proper response to Willie's glowing description of the two Maury Mavericks and San Antonio.

Houston held less appeal: "a phantasmagoric place . . . raw and seething like Southern California." Miriam Kass, in the *Houston Post*, favored *North Toward Home* with an extended and thoughtful review, yet pointed out justly that the Texas section "is uneven, like notes not fully digested, but still good reading." Nona Pipes of the *Houston Chronicle* tersely dismissed the book: "There is no idea which unifies this collection of personal observations and reminiscences, no insight which the reader can take away with him."

Finally, "there was Dallas, always a

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ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO San Francisco had already changed greatly from the gaudy Gold Rush village of 'forty-nine. It was the metropolis of the West, still the lively, wide-open city it had been before but proud of its churches and factories and schools. Already hundreds of acres of Yerba Buena Cove had been filled in and covered by substantial buildings.

Filling and building has continued down to our own times. Mission Rock is now a part of the waterfront. The "Long Bridge" was still a new route out to the Potrero and Hunters Point in 1868. The present Ferry Building is located at about the end of the Market Street Wharf. The end of Meigg's Wharf, a landmark when North Beach was really a beach, marks almost exactly the spot where the sailing ship Balclutha today entertains tourists too young ever to have seen a Cape Horn windjammer.

By 1868 the Mission Dolores was no longer way out of town, though its setting was suburban. Near the Mission was Woodward's Gardens, a favorite Sunday resort.

Golden Gate Park was just getting to the paper-work stage in 1868, and most of the lands that now comprise this great park were nothing but the "worthless" shifting sand dunes stretching between Lone Mountain and the sea. The Cliff House was even then a landmark, and it was reached by a dusty carriage drive out what is now Geary Boulevard.

Above all, San Francisco a hundred years ago was a sea-town, and one will note that the lithographer took great pains to show every type of ship and maritime activity that was involved in the life and commerce of America's "window on the Pacific."

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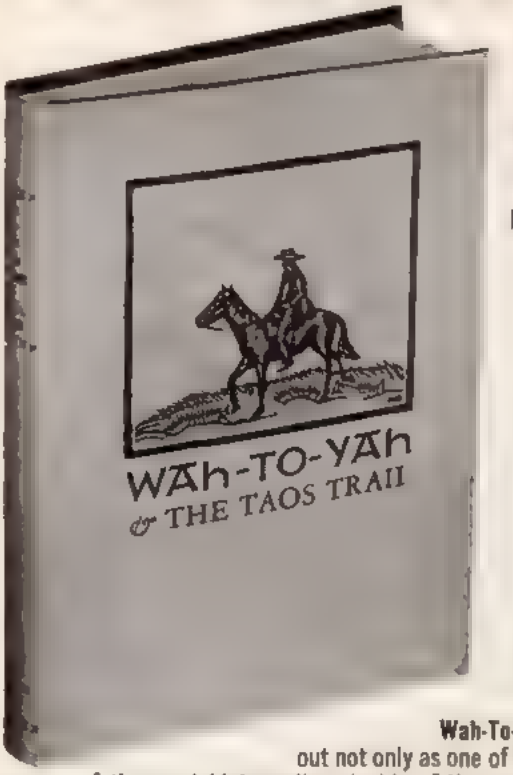

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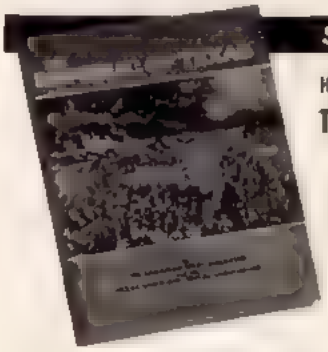

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cavernous city for me, claustrophobic, full of thundering certitudes and obsessed with its image ... demanded undeviating conformity." Apparently, Morris's conformity-demanding city fathers were more lenient with book editors, however, for both A. C. Green of the *Dallas Times Herald* and Lon Tinkle of the *Dallas Morning News* wrote long and enthusiastic reviews of *North Toward Home*. Indeed, Green lauded it as "an inspired piece of human geography — an *Education of Henry Adams* for our time and our world." I fail to see the analogy, if only because Henry Adams was so clearly a misfit while Willie Morris is eminently adaptable.

Dave Hickey, whose review in the *Texas Observer* is the most perceptive I have read, argues that Willie "is not going to tell his new neighbors [in New York] anything about Mississippi or Texas that they do not want to hear." It would be fairer to say of Morris that in generalizing his experience, Morris may not do justice to the uniqueness of the place. Texans will certainly want to read *North Toward Home* and decide for themselves.

LITERATURE OF THE REPUBLIC

(Continued from page 65)

Interests and Activities in Texas (1910) and George R. Rives's *United States and Mexico, 1821–1848* (1931). There are a score of superlative books on the Mexican War. William H. Goetzmann offers a fresh account in his study of American expansionism, *When the Eagle Screamed* (1966). Justin H. Smith's *War with Mexico* (2 vols., 1919) remains the standard reference work, although it is supremely prejudiced against Mexico. Bernard DeVoto has a more impartial sketch of the war in *The Year of Decision* (1946). Otis A. Singletary's *Mexican War* (1960) and David Lavender's *Climax at Buena Vista* (1966) are both well-written military histories; and Albert K. Weinberg's *Manifest Destiny* (1935) and Frederick Merk's *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History* (1963) offer conflicting interpretations of United States expansionism in the 1840's.

A number of books have been written about that enigmatic, myth-ridden

"Texas character," the central theme of Joe B. Frantz's "The Lone Star Mystique." In Frantz's own words, "the most civilized book ever written about Texas" is George Fuermann's *Reluctant Empire* (1957). *The Typical Texan* (1952), by Joseph Leach, is an able "biography of an American myth." Ronnie Dugger has recently published a volume entitled *Three Men in Texas: Bedichek, Webb, and Dobie* (1967) which illuminates the cultured side of the Texas character. Dugger's book, the works of Dobie, Webb, and Bedichek themselves, and Frantz's article afford ample proof that Texas has produced something besides cowboys and oil millionaires.

MANUFACTURED WAR

(Continued from page 68)

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Prairie Rebel: The Public Life of William Lemke *(University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, $7.50).* byEDWARD C. BLACKORBY *71

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Quest for Empire: The Political Kingdom of God and the Council of Fifty in Mormon History *(Michigan State University, East Lansing, 1967; 237 pp., notes, biblio., index, $6.50).* by KLAUS J. HANSEN ‡

The Rocky Mountain West in 1867 *(University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, $5.50).* Tr. by Wilson O. Clough. by LOUIS L. SIMONIN 71

Sam Houston with the Cherokees, 1829-1833 *(University of Texas, Austin, 1967; 206 pp., illus., notes, chrono., biblio., index, $6.00).* by JACK GREGORY and RENNARD STRICKLAND †70

Scurry County Style: Stories from Below the Cap Rock and Beyond *(University of Texas, Austin, 1967; 189 pp., $5.00).* by VIOLA M. PAYNE ‡

Soldiers of the Cross: Notes on the Ecclesiastical History of New Mexico, Arizona and Colorado *(Calvin Horn, Albuquerque, 1967; 299 pp., illus., notes, app., index, $7.50).* by MOST REV. JOHN BAPTIST SALPOINTE, D.D. ‡

The Southwest: Old and New *(University of Nebraska, Lincoln, 1968, c. 1961; 486 pp., illus., notes, biblio., index, pap., $2.95).* Introduction by Joe B. Frantz. by W. EUGENE HOLLON ‡

Spanish War Vessels on the Mississippi: 1792-1796 *(Yale University, New Haven, 1968; 359 pp., notes, index, $10.00).* by ABRAHAM P. NASATIR ‡*67

The Story of Man at Grand Canyon *(Grand Canyon Natural History Association Bulletin #14, Grand Canyon National Park, 1967; 195 pp., illus., biblio., index, pap., $3.00).* by J. DONALD HUGHES ‡

The Sunny Slopes of Long Ago *(Southern Methodist University, Austin, 1966; 204 pp., illus., notes, index, $5.95).* Texas Folklore Society Publication XXXIII. edited by WILSON M. HUDSON and ALLEN MAXWELL †70

Three Men in Texas: Bedichek, Webb, and Dobie *(University of Texas, Austin, 1967; 285 pp., intro., illus., $6.50).* edited by RONNIE DUGGER †70

Timber! *(Superior Publishing Co., Seattle, Fall 1968; illus., $12.95; prepublication $10.50).* by RALPH W. ANDREWS *75

A True Picture of Emigration and a Voyage to the Northwest Coast of America, by Rebecca and Edward Burlend *(Citadel Press, N.Y., 1968; 167 pp., historical intro., index, $6.00).* edited by MILO MILTON QUAIFE ‡

The University of Texas Archives: A Guide to the Historical Manuscript Collections in the University of Texas Library *(University of Texas, Austin, 1967; 594 pp., index, $25.00).* compiled and edited by CHESTER V. KIELMAN ‡

A Voyage to the Northwest Coast of America: An Early 19th-Century Journal of a Voyage from Montreal to the Columbia River via Cape Horn *(Citadel Press, N.Y., 1968; 318 pp., intro., index, $7.40).* edited by MILO MILTON QUAIFE ‡

Whiskey Jim and a Kid Named Billie *(Clarendon Press, Clarendon, Texas, 1968; 41 pp., illus., $5.00).* by W. H. HUTCHINSON and R. N. MULLIN ‡

Wilderness and the American Mind *(Yale University, New Haven, 1967; 256 pp., notes, biblio., index, $6.50).* by RODERICK NASH *67

Xit Buck: The Personal Recollections of a Fast-Moving and Fascinating Boyhood *(University of Arizona, Tucson, 1968; 284 pp., index, $4.95).* by C. E. MACCONNELL ‡

Yellowstone Jack and Other Poems of the Golden West *(Exposition Press, Inc., N.Y., 1968; 31 pp., $3.00).* by ELIZABETH BUSTOS ‡

The Rockies
by DAVID LAVENDER

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